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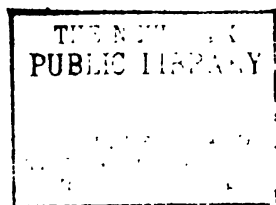
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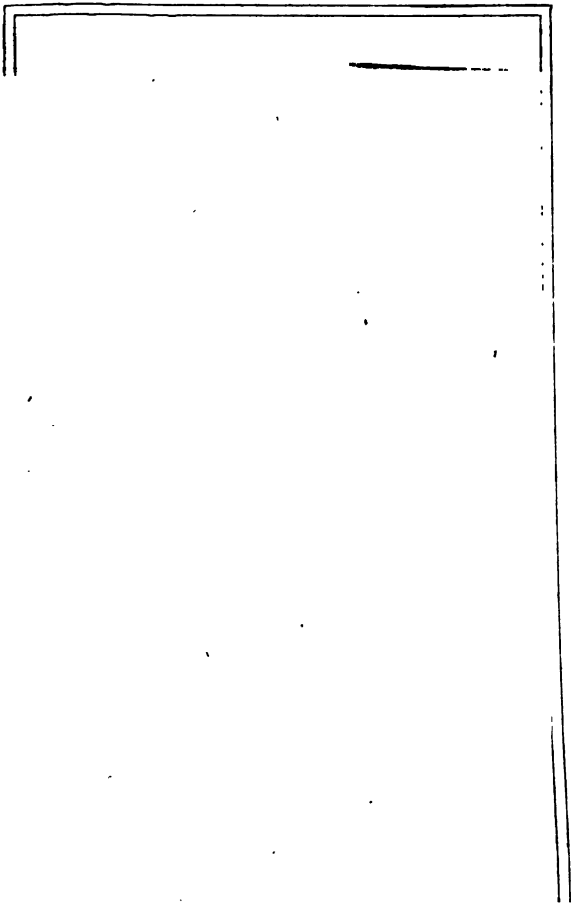
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“ The fading light only served to show the outlines of General Washington, whose figure was known to me ’ p 38.





HUGH FISHER:

OR,

HOME PRINCIPLES CARRIED OUT.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "ROBERT DAWSON," "JANE HUDSON," "REUBEN
KENT," ETC. ETC.

[Helen Broad Knight.]

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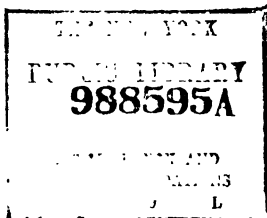
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HUGH FISHER.

“THERE’S Uncle Hugh! There he is, I’m sure!” exclaimed Henry,—his pale, sorrowful and expecting face suddenly lighting up, as he saw a wagon stop at a small house on the opposite side of the street.

“Run, child,” said the friendly neighbour at whose house we were, “run and ask him to come here. He’ll find it dull enough over there, I reckon.”

I stood at the window, watching Henry as he went and delivered his message. Uncle Hugh patted him on the head. It looked kind.

"Oh dear!" I sighed, without knowing it. Uncle Hugh tied his horse to a green post, and followed Henry to the house where we were. His heavy tread was soon heard in the entry. Mrs. French left her cooking, and went to meet him.

"Well, the poor lady has gone!" she said,—showing him into the sitting-room, where Agnes and I were. "She thought a dreadful sight about seeing you before she died. She said you were the only relative. There's the two youngest, Hugh and Agnes. That's Henry," pointing to my brother. "He is the oldest, and not very old, either."

My uncle stalked into the room.

"That's Hugh, is it?" fixing his large gray eyes on me. "He's a stout boy. He looks as if he could dig potatoes as well as anybody."

He took off his coat, and sat down.

"This is the girl,—the youngest. She looks dreadfully like her mother. Mrs. Gray wants her,"—drawing Agnes towards her, and smoothing down her apron.

"That's Agnes, is it? The girl!" said Uncle Hugh.

"I'm seeing to the dinner, so you'll excuse me," said Mrs. French, at the same time going towards the kitchen.

My uncle nodded.

"Let's see. He's the one that's got my name," he said, after staring at us all round, as we sat bolt upright, staring at him in return, and pointing at me in particular, with his hard, horny finger.

"Yes, that's Hugh!" said Henry.

"Well, Hugh, are you a good fellow to work?" asked he.

"Yes, sir," I whispered.

"Hugh is a good scholar," said Henry, ready to back me up in the good graces

of my relative. "The master says he is."

"Humph!" grunted our uncle; "and what does that amount to?"

Mr. French now came in, the head of the household, under whose roof we were, with whom my uncle presently went out to look after the horse and wagon.

"Am I named for *him*?" I whispered to Henry, as soon as his back was turned, "with a nose like that! I want to know?"

In fact, Uncle Hugh had not made a pleasant first impression upon my mind. "Is *he* the one that's to take care of us?" I said, looking at Henry. Henry looked at me. He answered nothing, but turned and glanced wistfully over to the little house that had so long been our home, now deserted and desolate. Tears came into his eyes.

Let me now tell you our situation. Our

father, a respected schoolmaster, had been dead nearly three years, leaving my mother and her three children, with slender means and still more slender health, to rear us up as God-fearing and dutiful children. By economy and industry, she contrived to live comfortably, with what aid Henry and I could occasionally render. Henry was now twelve, and I had just entered my eleventh year. In one short week our mother sickened and died, and (as I now think) it was through her overtasked efforts for our support. How kind and tender-hearted were the neighbours, as one and another took turns to nurse her and care for us! How many delicate bits did they bring her, which, being rejected by her, (for she was too sick to be thus tempted,) were bestowed upon us! Through the week we were kept at school, never dreaming what a sad and dreary Sunday

was in store for us. On Saturday night she died, and we were taken to the house of friendly Mrs. French, where our uncle met us. He arrived on Tuesday noon, the day after the funeral.

Mr. Hugh Fisher was the eldest brother of my father. No great intimacy had ever subsisted between the brothers, not for any fault of my father's, but for the grudge always harboured by Uncle Hugh against his brother, because he preferred head-work to hand-work, his books to his hoe. My father had contrived to gather together a little learning, sufficient to teach a grammar-school with much acceptance to his patrons. His ruddy countenance, his bright eye and hearty laugh are among our earliest and pleasantest remembrances. How it would have been had he lived—ah! that we cannot tell. Consumption seized him, and in a few months he was

gone! Of Uncl Hugh, we, as children, knew very little. I remember the remark more than once made by a neighbour—"It was a shame that Mr. Fisher, well off as he was, could not do something for his brother's widow, if it was only just to send down a barrel of apples or a bag of potatos."

It is certain no apples or potatos ever came, nor did my mother ever complain of it. "The boys would earn apples and potatos, before long," she said.

Finding her end drawing nigh, she determined to send for Mr. Hugh Fisher. She felt, that if he were not a tender-hearted man, he was far from being hard-hearted; and she was willing to feel that if he had not shown that interest in his brother's bereaved family that might have been expected, neither had she, perhaps, communicated with him as freely and openly as she might have done.

A letter was despatched, begging him to come to —.

“To have seen him, to have consulted with him about the children, to have committed them to his care,—if she could but have done this,—then would she die content.”

This she was not permitted to do; but every day of her life, ever since we were born, she committed us to the merciful care of our Father in heaven. Over the sad funeral scenes which followed, and the desolation which came over me when the coffin, which contained her dear form, was lowered into the grave, I will not now linger. They are fresh in my memory; and notwithstanding the goodness and mercy which has crowned my later days, those scenes are still painful to recall.

After dinner, we went over to the little half of a tenement which had long been

our happy home, and our uncle began to look into our mother's affairs. Anxious to return home as soon as possible, (it being in the height of spring farm-work,) he began to despatch business as speedily as he could. Henry was sent out to ascertain the amount of any little bills which the family owed. A small wallet, containing my mother's "papers," which had always been sacredly locked up in a trunk kept in the upper bureau-drawer, was now lying open on the table, while my uncle had turned around, and was sitting cross-legged before the fire, smoking his pipe. I went towards the table to look at the wallet.

"Let things alone," said my uncle, marking the movement. "Don't you know, boys must learn never to touch?"

Awed and frightened, I shrunk into the chair. A knock at the door, and Mr. Henry (a lawyer sent by Mr. French)

came in. They sat down and talked, while I crept round by the fire, looking and listening with a sad and heavy heart.

“A little memorandum here,” said my uncle, turning round to the table. “If the books could be kept, (she writes,) and the debts paid, she wished them to be equally divided among the children—humph!”

“Are there many?” asked the lawyer.

“There they are!” and Uncle Hugh pointed to a small book-case crammed with books.

“Oh, ay! yes! your brother’s, I suppose,” said the lawyer, scanning them where he sat. “He was a reading man, and a very excellent one. One of our best schoolmasters, Mr. Fisher.”

“Humph!” responded my uncle; “I have no great opinion of bookish men. They are never worth a cent! Books are moths, I’m thinking,—moths on our time

Our fathers did not make such a fuss about books and schools, and who thrived better than they?"

Henry now came back with some bills, and we were sent out of the room.

What to do with the children was the most perplexing question of all, and was pretty nearly settled by evening. Mrs. Gray, a friend of my mother's, asked for Agnes. She loved the child, and the child loved her. Agnes then was carried "home." "This is your home, now," said Henry, as we stopped at the front-gate, and looked up to Mrs. Gray's house.

"And your's and Hugh's," added Agnes.

"No; I am going to stay at Mr. French's, close by, you know; and Hugh is going to Uncle Hugh's house. He's going in the wagon, to have a ride," said Henry, in a half-coaxing, half-soothing tone.

"No! no!" cried Agnes, looking distressed. "Mother has gone, and now Hugh goes, and you go, too! I will stay at Mrs. French's, too. I don't want to stay here alone—I don't!"

"When Mrs. Gray loves you so!" said Henry. "Little girls can't do without mothers, and Mrs. Gray will be your mother. She will get you a little chair,—and don't you remember the dear little cup she said she had got for you?"

The soothing tones of Henry's voice, with the image of the little cup and chair, had a quieting effect upon the child's mind, who was very docile, and always ready to be pleased.

Thursday morning, Uncle Hugh was going to set out for home. Henry and I slept together at Mrs. Gray's, so as to eat supper and breakfast with Agnes. I awoke in the morning with a dull, heavy

sense of something formidable and disagreeable weighing upon me. In the dim morning light, Mrs. Gray's white counterpane and the picture of St. John, over the mantelpiece, quite puzzled me. "Where am I?" I exclaimed, starting up and rubbing my eyes.

"Where are we?" asked Henry, who was already wide awake; indeed, he had not slept, for the sad thoughts of our approaching separation. "Where are we? Why, here we are!" It was true enough, but not very satisfactory. Yes; here we were, in Mrs. Gray's best chamber; and here was I, having just slept through my last night with Henry.

"Oh, dear!" I sighed, sliding down into bed, and covering up my head with the clothes.

"I think as much," added Henry, with a sigh. "Oh, how happy we used to be!

Who would have thought of this, two weeks ago! All three of us in different places!"

"All four," said I,—“mother, you know.”

“She—down in the earth!” Henry choked; then, plunging his head into the pillow, he cried outright. It was the first time he had fairly cried. He had looked pale—very pale and sorrowful, but he had tried all he could to comfort Agnes and me, telling us how mother ‘had gone to heaven; how God wanted her, and how glad she would be to be with Jesus Christ. But the last breaking up,—it was too much for the poor fellow, and he gave way to an uncontrollable burst of sorrow.

“Henry! dear Hen!” I cried, throwing my arms around him, myself now turning comforter,—“don’t you know what you’ve said? Let us be men. We’ve got to be ourselves, now! Dear Hen, God

will not leave us. Don't you remember what mother used to say, how He who hears the young ravens will not turn a deaf ear to the cry of the young orphans!"

Henry still sobbed. The chamber-door gently opened. Agnes, in her night-gown, peeped in, then ran laughing towards the bed.

"I came to wake you up. Mrs. Gray said I might," she said,—climbing up the side of the bed. Agnes nestled down between us—Henry with his face plunged into the pillow, and I sitting bolt upright, trying to be a man. Agnes put her face down by Henry's, and stroked his hair.

"I think I'm the one to feel the worst," I said, feeling very pitifully. "I am sure I am. I must go a long way off, and you are both going to stay with those you know. I love Mrs. Gray and the Frenches, but Uncle Hugh"—

"Hugh, you will write to me often, won't you?" said Henry, rolling over and wiping his eyes with his shirt-sleeves.

"What are you going there for, Hugh?" asked Agnes. "Mrs. Gray will let you stay here. I'll ask her if she won't."

"It is kind in uncle, to give Hugh a home, Agnes. You know we've got no home now," said Henry, with a quivering lip.

"Sha'n't we ever have our own home again—ever?" asked the child, with a sad wondering, as if she thought it was a strange world she had been born into.

"Yes, Agnes!" I exclaimed; "when I get my education; when I am a man—a minister, may-be,—then we shall have our own home again."

"That's a great way off," said Henry sadly; "a great way off!" Poor little fellow! He never lived to see the day.

There we all sat, our arms around each other, not speaking for some minutes. "Hugh," said the eldest, at last breaking the silence, "I hope you will remember *one* thing—that God is at Uncle Hugh's as well as here. You must keep his commandments," he added, in a tone of deep solemnity. "You must pray, every night and morning, just as we always used to do at home. It makes no difference where we are, about such things as these. You know, Hugh, God has been our heavenly Father for a great while, and now he'll have to be father and mother too."

"I know it," I answered, "and I mean to pray there. I am sure I would not leave it off on any account. Don't you remember how mother used to pray, and what she used to say about it to us?"

"That is just what I was thinking of," said Henry.

“And I shall pray, too,” added Agnes. “Jesus said, Suffer little children to come unto me,—and I am a little child, a’n’t I, Henry?”

Mrs. Gray now tapped at the door, and putting in her kind, motherly face, told us to jump up and dress ourselves, for breakfast was almost ready.

At seven o’clock, Uncle Hugh’s wagon drove up to the door. Breakfast was not quite over, but I had finished all but my half-tumbler of milk.

“Yes, Hugh; and you must come down at Thanksgiving,” said Mrs. Gray, in a cheerful tone, seeing Henry go towards the back-window, with a tear in his eye. “We will write to you, and you must write to us. Agnes shall learn to write, also,—won’t you, Agnes? And here is a nice bit of something to take in your pocket, for a luncheon by the way. You will be

hungry by-and-by." And so she talked, leaving us no time to dwell upon the parting.

"Oh, Mrs. Gray, do ask Uncle Hugh if he may come down to Thanksgiving," whispered Henry, twitching Mrs. Gray by the sleeve. "Please, do. He'll mind it more from you. Then we can count when to see Hugh again."

Meanwhile, I drank my milk, pocketed the luncheon, shouldered my bundle,—all my effects having been reduced to so small a compass as to be carried in a handkerchief,—and marched out at the door. Mrs. Gray ran down the steps, to bargain for Thanksgiving.

"May-be, may-be!" answered Uncle Hugh, "seeing he's a pretty smart boy."

"Hugh is smart," said Henry, in an under-tone; "so I have no doubt he'll come, if it depends on that;" and his countenance lighted up.

The bundle was hoisted into the wagon, which I soon followed, after kissing all round with considerably more courage than I expected. The prospect of a ride took something from the pain of parting. "Good-by, Henry! Good-by, Agnes! Good-by, dear, good Mrs. Gray!"

Uncle Hugh whipped up his horse, and we set off at a rapid rate. The brisk air of a cool June morning was reviving to the spirits, and gave an elastic thrill to the whole system; so that, as we passed by one familiar object and another,—the mill, the bridge, the tan-yard and the cove,—the good-by glances did not touch my heart as they might have done. I was curious to know what we should see in the different towns through which we should pass. My uncle named them, and bade me keep a good look-out. Uncle Hugh was not inclined to be sociable. Mile

after mile we rode on, and not a word was spoken. At last we reached the outskirts of a village, where a tall sign-post marked a tavern-stand of no mean dimensions. My uncle reined in his horse.

“Cool morning!” said a burly-looking man, standing in the door.

“Cool enough for June, I’m thinking,” was the reply, and Uncle Hugh jumped out. “You can stretch your legs here, if you like, my boy,” he said, addressing me, “or stay in the wagon.” Glad of an opportunity of stretching my legs, I was over the side of the wagon in a second. After watering and tying his horse, he entered the tavern, and called for a glass of grog.

Though grog-drinking was more common then than now-a-days, my mother brought us up according to strict temperance rules; and the idea of grog-drink-

ing was associated, in my mind, with whatever was vulgar, as well as wrong. A very wretched shop, in the street where we lived, served to illustrate, in a very lively manner, all our mother's reasonings upon the subject. I remember feeling a sense of mortification, on seeing Uncle Hugh stirring his toddy and raising the glass to his lips. I turned my back, and went out on the portico before the door. After finishing my luncheon and drinking some clear, sparkling water from the nose of the pump, we were ready to start again; nor had we gone far, before my uncle graciously asked—

“Well, Hugh, have you ever cast about in your mind what you mean to do when you get bigger?”

“No, sir; not exactly. I want to get an education first: then I can tell better.”

“Humph! An education! And what does that mean?”

I looked up, to see what he meant. Could it be Uncle Hugh who did not know what getting an education is!

“Humph! Yes,” he presently repeated, “what does getting an education mean? —that’s the question!”

I saw he meant it for me to answer.

“Why, finding out what other people know; getting all sorts of knowledge from books; filling up the mind with useful things. Mother says, knowledge is what people can’t take from us.”

“Humph! All fol-de-rol, in my opinion!” at the same time violently jerking the reins.

I looked up, surprised, if not alarmed, and simply said, “Sir?”

“Fol-de-rol, in my opinion,” persisted my uncle, in a sharp tone. “All fol-de-

rol! Your father might have been worth something, if it hadn't been for his education. It never did him no good. It shortened his days. Now, my father was a perfectly healthy man, and when he died, it was of an epidemic fever. It's all fudge—making so much ado for the sake of a little learning. There's Squire Kelly, all run out! There's our minister—sickly, puling fellow!—can't hoe a dozen hills of corn without a pain or something. There was your father—a likely boy as need be, till he took a notion for books,—never good for any thing after that! I'd as soon one of my boys took to — as to learning. Bless my stars, they don't! They take after me, in that!"

He did not say what he had rather his boys would take to, and I could not, from his tone and manner, think of any thing bad enough. I well remember looking at

him earnestly, from top to toe, to see what manner of man he was—his nose began to look very red—for it was the first time I ever heard such opinions advanced.

My mother had taken great pains to foster in us a taste for reading. Reading, she said—reading, of course, good books—was a great safeguard for youth. She always sympathized with us in our studies; and so strong was my own early relish for reading and study, that I hardly remember the time when I did not suppose a good education one of the most desirable things in the world, next to a good conscience, or, perhaps I should say, next to becoming a sincere Christian. Our mother always taught us the indispensableness of a new heart and a right spirit, in order to become the real children of God, or that we may have a good hope of reaching heaven at last. My father had de-

lighted in my early taste for books, and, before his death, I had made some progress in the Latin grammar.

“Hugh must have an education,” had always been a sort of settled thing in the family. After my father’s death, my mother always spoke hopefully of the matter, ever declaring that there were more ways than one to bring about a desirable object.

In this light, one may well suppose that the opinions advanced by Uncle Hugh were particularly distasteful. In fact, I was not quite sure how to take them. Was he not talking for fun? For fun! there was nothing in his hard, brown, cold face that looked like fun. After scanning him sideways a good while and looking at the horse’s head, I was about asking him whether there were no schools up his way, when another village came in sight, and he reined in at another tavern.

The remainder of the ride was long and dull. The exhilarating morning air had given place to a warm, noonday sun. I was tired with the long ride,—the longest I had ever taken,—and to the ever-lengthening distance from all I knew and loved, was added an uneasiness in my mind about the new and strange way of thinking Uncle Hugh had.

I wished I was out of the jolting wagon. Any thing but riding with such a red pug-nose! This was the way of venting my spleen upon my uncle. I felt angry and provoked. Just as if my parents did not know as well as he!

It was two o'clock before we reached Springville. My uncle's farm was a border farm, between Springville and Loudon, off the main road, east of the village. It was the homestead farm, and was the spot where my father was born, which accounted

for my greater readiness to accompany Uncle Hugh. He had often told us about it, and we had often wished to see it, especially the pond and Pilot Mountain, where he used to go with the boys. I must confess, I was a little disappointed on coming in sight of a black, two-story house, which Uncle Hugh pointed out with his whip as "the place." Two large barns, both newer and better-looking than the house, were behind it; a well, with its long pole and iron-bound bucket, were prominent in the yard, which was full of logs, wood, brush, harrows, and I know not what. Two dogs came running out to meet us. A woman, with gray hair, fat and sun-burnt, stood in the door, staring hard at me, and we drove into the yard.

"Well! yer come back, and fetched one with yer."

"I guess so."

“Well! what’s the youngster’s name?”

I had jumped out of the wagon, and was taking out my bundle.

“My name is Hugh,” said I, seeing my uncle left me to announce myself.

“Well! that’s lucky.”

Ah! I was not so sure of that.

“You look a sight like your father. Well! come in and get something to eat.”

I followed my aunt into the house with a dull, heavy pain about my heart. I shall pass over dinner and supper, and my introduction to Nat and Bill, my cousins, of fifteen and seventeen years. Oh, that long, lonely afternoon! There were the dogs and the pigs, the barn and barn-yard, the hens and the geese,—the bee-hives, too, in a sunny knoll behind the corn-house. These, under other circumstances, would have been subjects of deep interest to me; but, somehow or other, I found myself

creeping down by the stone-wall, and looking wistfully down the road whence we came, straining my eyes for—I hardly knew what. Then I wandered down behind the barn, and threw myself on the sweet, green turf, and thought of my dear mother, who now lay beneath it,—oh! and I really wished I was there, too, by her side. Nobody loving, nobody caring for me, here! “What *shall* I do?” I passionately exclaimed. “What *shall* I do? I cannot live here! It is not like my home! ’Tis not like Mrs. Gray’s, nor Mrs. French’s!” and I burst into a flood of tears.

Bed-time brought some relief. “Where is the boy to sleep?” asked my uncle.

“With Jem, to be sure,” answered my aunt. “Where else would anybody expect him to sleep?”

“Ay, ay!” answered Uncle Hugh; and,

bundle in hand, I followed my aunt to the chamber—a large, airy, rough-looking room, over the wood-house.

“Who is Jem?” I asked, timidly. “Am I going to sleep with him?”

“Jem’s the man that lives here. He’ll be home to-morrow. You are going to sleep with him. I don’t know whether he likes boys, or not; but, I guess, he won’t be particular.”

I wanted to ask more, but was afraid; when, after smoothing down the bed, she pointed to a red chest of drawers, and told me to “put my clothes away in the lowest—any time, not to-night,”—then, bidding me sleep like a porpoise and be a good boy, she left the chamber.

“Sleep like a porpoise! I wonder if she knows how porpoises sleep!” I muttered to myself, as her steps were lost in the distance. On casting my eyes around

the room, I spied several coarse pictures pasted up on one side of the partition; I hastened to make them out; but the fading light only served to show the outlines of General Washington, whose figure was well known to me, by two pictures which I had already seen of him. The pictures somehow gave me great delight; they seemed home-like, and I set about wondering who pasted them up. "Oh, if it's only Jem!" and the very thought gave me a fellow-feeling for him.

At first I did not like to lie down in the strange, old wood-house chamber, all alone, and so far off from the rest of the family. I contrasted it with the night before,—*only* the night before,—in Mrs. Gray's best chamber, under her beautiful white counterpane, with the beautiful face of St. John looking down upon Henry and me, like a good angel watching over us.

“What is to become of me?” I cried aloud. I wanted to scream “Mother! Father! Henry! Agnes!” Oh! could not some of them,—could not *one* of them hear me? The scalding tears *would* come: they came thick and fast. “What shall I do? What shall I do?” I cried aloud, tumbling on to the bed. After a little while, I got up again and kneeled down to pray. Henry’s words in the morning came forcibly upon me. “I will mind Henry,” I said; “Henry is such a good boy,—and it will be minding mother, too.”

After this duty was done—a duty always enjoined by our mother, both by her example and instructions—I again jumped upon the bed; and, although it seemed as if I had no heart to sleep, sleep came unawares; and before long, I dare say, I was fairly, though unwittingly obeying

the injunction of my aunt; though, whether she did really know how porpoises slept, I never was able satisfactorily to ascertain.



First Week at Uncle Hugh's.

THE next forenoon, my uncle gave me my choice, to go down into the field with the men and boys, or stay and do chores about the house, and get acquainted with matters and things. Upon the whole, I chose the latter.

After bringing in some brush, to kindle a fire in the oven, setting out the milk-pans to dry in the sun, and feeding the four little pigs, I strayed away into the sitting-room, in hope to get sight of a book. There was an ostrich egg-shell under the glass, and two peacocks' feathers waving over the top of it, which served to interest me for a while, recalling

all I had read about ostriches and peacocks, and making a little talk between my aunt and myself. Ostrich egg-shells and peacocks' feathers, but nothing like a book met the eye. Then I strolled into the barns, climbed up the hay-mow, examined the stalls, wishing, all the time, in my heart, for Henry. "If *Henry* were only here! If Henry were *only* here!"

While striving hard to drive away dull thoughts, by swinging on a beam in the new barn, a man stalked in with two flails on his shoulder. He stopped on seeing me, and asked, "Who is this?"

"Hugh Fisher," I answered.

"Not old Hugh Fisher," he said, his lips puckering with a smile.

"He's my uncle. I came to stay with him. My mother is—dead!" It was hard to say it.

"Shake hands, Hugh, then," he said,

in a friendly tone. "I know something how to feel for you. I lost my mother, about your age;" and seizing my hand, he gave it a feeling grip. From that moment, I felt that I had a friend, though who the man was, or where he came from, I could not tell. His coarse, blue, homespun shirt covered a tall, lean, awkward body, with a face pitted by the small-pox, and shaded by long, grizzly hair. In spite of a personal appearance which was any thing but prepossessing on first sight, there was a friendly expression in his eye and around his mouth, which showed that he had a heart, and a large one, too.

"This is not like where you came from, is it?" he said, flinging his flails upon a rail. "How do you think you shall like to be a farmer's boy?"

"I don't know," I said; "it don't seem like home, here."

"Most likely not," he answered. "You must take time for that. It will take a little while to get used to things; but we have got a plenty of sweet air, and good, rich milk."

"But it seems so different!" I sighed.

"You'll get used to it. Only make up your mind to be contented. That's it."

"I can't make up my mind to any such thing. I know I can't!" and the hot tears gushed from my eyes. I was ashamed of it, and turned to go out at the barn-door.

"Oh, yes, you can!" he said, soothingly. "Oh, yes, you can!—This a'n't the worst place that ever was. Would you not rather be here than be a soldier going to battle?"

"I had just as lief be Washington, or some such as he," answered I.

"But where there is one Washington,

there's a thousand who have to do the dirty work ; so that a thousand chances to one you'd be among the men, and not among the officers."

"You've read about him?" I said eagerly.

"And heard about him, too. My father served under him."

I looked at the man with curiosity and interest.

"Suppose you go down in the field with me," said he, looking for his hoe. "I must go to work."

We set out together, talking as we went. On reaching the edge of the potato-field, I said, I wished I could live at his house ; "but, may-be, I can come down and see you sometimes, if I knew where you lived, and what is your name."

"My name is Jem," said the man.

"Are you the Jem I am going to sleep

with?" I cried, with a pleased surprise.

"The Jem that lives here?"

"Exactly so," answered he.

"Why!" I exclaimed. "Why!"

Then the sun, which had not seemed to shine for many days, gleamed through the clouds of my heart.

The family rose early, and went to bed early. When bedtime came, I began to wonder if I could say my prayers before Jem. I felt uneasy and anxious, and tried if I could not contrive to get up-stairs and get all through before he came up. So, taking time by the forelock, as soon as supper was over I scampered off, and bolted into my chamber like a locomotive. But, lo! Jem was already there, undressing.

"I am dreadful tired," said Jem. I did not speak, but stood, perplexed, on the spot where I had suddenly stopped, not knowing what to do.

"Any thing the matter?" asked Jem, who could not help noticing my puzzled expression.

"Nothing particular," said I, going out again.

"Hallo!" cried Jem. "Something's on your mind. Out with it! You'll feel all the better for it."

"Nothing particular," I persisted, turning round and coming back. I was tempted to give up my prayers that night. I was sure I could not say them before Jem. He a man, and I nothing but a boy! I began also to undress, and, for the first time since I could remember, was tempted to lie down upon my bed without prayer. I turned down the sheet, then sat down on the bedside, then went to the window. A severe conflict was going on within my heart. To pray, or not to pray? "The fear of man, which bringeth a

snare," sorely and strongly tempted me, for once, to forego my accustomed devotional duty. Boy as I was, there was the world, sin and the devil on one side; my conscience, my known and understood duty, my obligations to God, on the other. I as thoroughly understood what my duty was in the matter, at that age, as I do now. In neglecting it, I should have done it deliberately, and with a full knowledge of the guilt. In doing so, I should, in fact, have *denied God*; I should have been ashamed to own him before men. It was the sin and shame of Peter, when he was afraid to own an acquaintance with Jesus, his Master, on account of what people would say. So was I, at that moment, ashamed of owning that I held intercourse with my heavenly Friend, my God and Father. Ashamed of God!

“Ashamed of Jesus! that dear Friend
On whom our hopes of heaven depend!”

Nobody, who had seen me at that moment, would have supposed that I was doing a great wrong to my soul,—the greatest wrong that can be done to the soul. I was not stealing, I was not swearing, or telling a lie, or drinking, or playing cards,—no, none of these things, which people could see, and say, “How wicked it is!” It was a *heart* sin: not less a sin for that. It was not a sin against man: it was a sin against God; and God looketh at the heart. It was a moment full of tremendous issues. It was the forming period of my life. I was called, earlier than most boys, to take a stand by myself, for or against the principles in which I had been educated. Should I now abandon those religious habits in which I had been reared from infancy, or should I abide by

them? Should I carry them out, or throw them aside? If they were important for me *at home*, how much more important, as safeguards and means of religious improvement, *away* from home. I tremble when I think of it. I tremble for other boys in similar situations, because their future commonly depends upon what they do and think while they are boys. Think of that, boys; and when you go away from home, do not, in a cowardly way, abandon the good home-principles in which you have been brought up.

Jem got into bed. He asked me what I was looking out of the window at, and why I did not come to bed. I told him I was watching the fire-flies, which was the truth, though not the whole truth. Presently, he began to breathe hard: then I knew he was asleep, and then I kneeled down and prayed, and afterwards crept

into bed ; but a voice seemed speaking in my ear, and it said, " Coward ! " I turned over and over, fixed my pillow and fixed it again ; but it still kept saying, " Coward ! " Coward ! yes ; something within answered that it was but too true—too true.

As any one might see, this secret way of getting over with my devotional duties, well as it might serve for one night, could not answer for every night, nor, indeed, for the second. Was this sneaking struggle to go on every bedtime ? Ah ! how much better to be honest and true in the *first place* ! Remember that.

Well, the second night came. I meant to be sure and go up first this time, and finish my duty by the time Jem came up. But, somehow or other, again he got the start of me. I felt worse the second night than I did the first. Cowardly, I

knew I was, but the tempter kept saying, "No matter; say your prayers after you get into bed. God can hear you in the bed as well as out of it." But I remembered our mother had settled that point a long while before, when I once asked her about it. "Hugh," she said, "if you wanted to ask a great favour of a great king, upon whom your life, your goods, your friends, your happiness all depended, would you dare approach him in a careless, thoughtless way? Would you not choose the most respectful, decorous and becoming manner, such as would befit your dependent situation? You would not come carelessly and indifferently to God, the King of kings!"

Tumbling into bed and praying, when I was not sick, looked too much like carelessness, and I was afraid to do it.

"Jem!" was called from the bottom

of the stairs. "Jem!" It was my uncle's voice. Jem drew on his trousers, and went down. "How lucky!" I chuckled. Seizing my little Testament, and hastily reading over a few verses by the fast-fading twilight, I threw myself on my knees and prayed. Having yet scarcely composed my mind for the solemn duty, Jem was heard returning to the chamber. My first impulse was to jump up. The awful question, "Are you ashamed of Jesus Christ, your only Friend, now your father and mother are gone?" came pointedly to my conscience. I pressed my hand against my eyes: fear, doubt, shame, duty, conscience—all spoke together. That instant was a turning-point. I *kept kneeling!* The door opened, and I kept kneeling! God be praised, he gave me strength to confess him before the world,—for Jem and the wood-house chamber were all the

world to me. Jem stopped, as he opened the door and saw me on my knees. It was very, very still. My heart beat violently, as, in a low and almost inarticulate tone, I continued before my God in prayer. How different were my feelings, when I at last arose, from what they had before been. A quiet, peaceful feeling came over me, and it did not seem as if mother—dear mother—was *very* far off. Perhaps she was then one of those ministering spirits, which the Bible says are sometimes sent on errands of love to this world of trial.

Jem and I both went to bed without saying any thing. I was almost asleep, when he turned over, and, laying his brawny arm on my shoulder, said, "Hugh, who taught you to pray?"

"My mother," answered I.

"So mine did me."

“Do you?” I asked.

“Ay, that’s a master question, and put by a boy like you, too, Hugh. Do I? I *ought* to. I hold to people’s praying, if it’s no more than civil; and *I* think folks ought to pray in their families; that would teach the young folks. If the old folks don’t, what can you expect?”

“Because old folks don’t, it’s no reason young folks *shouldn’t*, though—is it, Jem?” I asked. Having done my duty, I felt strong.

“Hugh,” said Jem; “Hugh, my boy! I say, Hugh, you’ve got what I call pluck—and it’s worth more to anybody, my father used to say, than all the silver and gold in the world.” With this, Jem rolled over again to his side. Alas, how little he knew me!

Sunday morning came. It was very beautiful. I arose early, carefully wash-

ing and dressing before any one was astir.

Jem was all the while in a deep sleep. When he awoke, he started up, rubbing his eyes, and asked what time it was. I did not know, but told him nobody was up.

"Late enough, though, I'll be bound," said Jem, bestirring himself.

"Do we walk or ride to church, or how?" I asked.

"How, I guess," — answered Jem. "That's the way they generally go. Your uncle's folks are not much of go-to-meeting hands—that's the long and short of it."

"Don't they go at all?" I asked anxiously.

"Pretty much so-so," answered Jem. "It's not as I was brought up."

"Nor I," I added. "No, indeed! we always went to meeting, in all sorts of

weather : and I think it is wicked to stay at home. It is not keeping the Sabbath day holy, to stay at home when you can go to church."

"Good doctrine," said Jem, leaving the room.

When we met at breakfast, how dirty and lazy did everybody look—sleepy and listless, too ! There was none of the busy activity of week-days, except in my aunt, who was getting a rich breakfast of pancakes and fried pork and potatoes. When the breakfast-horn sounded, my uncle was whittling on a log in the yard ; Nat was playing with the dog, and Bill was fixing his fishing-tackle.

"Is this Sunday ?" I asked myself.

After breakfast, I whispered to Nat, and asked what time we went to meeting.

"That is according to how you go."

"How shall you go? How do you commonly go?"

"We are not much of going-to-meeting folks," answered Nat.

"If you don't go, what do you do?" I asked impatiently, perhaps.

"Do? why, whatever we have a mind to! Go a-fishing, or over to Pilot Mountain, or over to the village—enough to do. Bill says he's going trouting. I guess I shall go, too; and, Hugh, have you not a mind to join us? At any rate, I want just to borrow that nice little rod of your's, that shuts in so snugly."

Nat said this in a more friendly tone than I thought he could use. Nat and Bill were no great talkers. They generally went about their business—they minding nobody, and nobody minding them.

Going trouting! How my father used to tell us about going trouting, and how I

should like to go! Of all things, what would be pleasanter than going trouting? Trouting where my father used to go, and following up the little babbling brooks!

Then, too, I had his rod. It was the only thing I took, besides my Bible and my clothes. My mother gave it to me, soon after he died. She said, "Here, Hugh, this shall be your's; keep it for your father's sake."

Father used to love to go out, and sit on the quiet banks and under shady trees, or follow up the streams, on pleasant Saturday afternoons. Henry and I often used to go with him. The rod was composed of many pieces, to be lengthened and shortened at pleasure. I had shown it to Nat as my choice treasure, though, as yet, I had never fished; and this was the only time my cousins seemed to take any special interest in me, or any thing pertaining to

me. I was a sorrowful little orphan then. The idea of trying to comfort, or make another happy, I do not suppose ever entered their minds. They went upon the maxim, that each must take care of one. But now Nat wanted to borrow my rod to go trouting, and he wanted me to go, too—but—it was *Sunday*!

“If you are going,” said Nat, supposing he saw “yes” in my earnest, glowing face, “get off your best clothes,—mother won’t allow that!—and run, bring down your rod,—be quick!”

“Why, it is *Sunday*!” I said, at length.

“What of that?” asked my cousin.

“What are you talking about?” asked Bill, issuing from the wood-house with his fishing-tackle. “You are going with us, a’n’t you, Hugh?”

“Why, it is Sunday,” I again said,—my heart beating quickly.

“What of *that*, I say?” cried Nat, in a vexed tone.

“I dare say, Hugh thinks we must do nothing but sing psalms,” said Bill, with a tone of voice which I did not relish.

“No such thing!” I answered excitedly; “but I *do* think Sunday is no day to go fishing in. Doing so is not keeping it as the Bible says, I am sure.”

“Bible says? What do you know about what the Bible says?” asked Bill.

“I think as much,” joined Nat.

“I know it says, ‘Remember the Sabbath-day, to keep it holy: in it thou shalt do no work.’”

“No work!” exclaimed Nat; “that’s my doctrine. I don’t go for work, except when the hay or grain must be got in.”

“But you *do* trout,” said Bill, giggling. “Yes; so do I; and Hugh will be ready enough to let his rod go and do the work,

and he'll be glad enough to eat the trout, if we'll catch 'em. That's the way with these Sunday-folks, father says. There's Squire Jones: he himself goes to meeting, while he don't mind starting his men off with a drove of cattle Sunday morning, eh!"

"Well, Hugh a'n't a man. So,—are you going, or not going?" cried Nat, with an impatient jerk of his shoulders. "Nobody will mind or care, I guess, whether you go or not."

"No; I should like, of all things, to go trouting," I answered, "but I cannot go on Sunday. My mother would not be willing, I am very sure."

Bill muttered, "I wonder what *she* knows about it now," while Nat said, "Well, you won't object to lending me your rod, and I'll pay you in fish to-night, when I get home."

Oh, dear! what a perplexity presented itself to my mind! How could I dare *not* lend it to him? How could I dare refuse him? I certainly had just as lief lend it to him on any *other* day, and I should have been glad if I possessed any thing of interest to my cousins, and glad of any way of obliging them,—but letting out my rod for Sunday-work: that was the rub! I put my hands into my pocket, and pulled them out again. I kicked the chips, and ground the heel of my Sunday shoe into the ground.

“What in the world said Nat impatiently, “are you thinking of? I want your fishing-rod, Hugh.”

The Sabbath, and the various ways of desecrating it, had been much canvassed in the town where we used to live, and it so happened that my parents had entered with a deep, intelligent interest into the

subject; and young as we were, Henry and I had been thoroughly instructed on the Sabbath-keeping side of the argument. How little they thought that, as a boy, I ever should be called to stand up alone and test the principles in which they instructed me. The point now was, that I should not only not break the Sabbath *myself*, but should in no way aid or abet others in so doing, remotely or directly, nor knowingly and willingly let my *property* violate the Sabbath.

“Oh, dear!” cries the Sabbath-keeping owner of stock in a Sabbath-breaking railway, “how can it be expected of me to be accountable for what my *property* does? If I am squeamish, others won’t be—So the cars will run, whether or no.”

“Oh, dear!” sighed poor I to myself; “am I responsible for what my fishing-rod does? If I am squeamish, Nat and

Bill will go and break the Sabbath, whether or no."

"Yes, but you *are* responsible for what you knowingly and willingly let your property do," exclaims conscience; "you certainly are. Your property is a talent for you to use aright. It is an influence by which you *show* what your principles are, or whether you have any settled principles at all: you have no business, according to Bible principles, to let your store for a gambling-saloon, or loan your money for the liquor-trade, or let your horses and carriages to Sabbath pleasure-parties, or keep your shares in Sabbath-breaking corporations. 'I can't control corporations,' you may say. No, you cannot, perhaps; but as far as your example and authority go, you can lift up your voice and example against Sabbath-breaking, by quitting them. If all men who respect the Sab-

bath will stand up and do their duty in this respect, a healthy public opinion will be created, which will in the end stop Sabbath desecration altogether. But I am wandering from my subject.

There I stood alone,—I and my property,—the nice little fishing-rod on one side, and the *world*, with its dull, blunted moral perceptions, in the shape of my cousins Nat and Bill, on the other. *I* had decided against trouting, and in favour of Sabbath-keeping, I, my personal self; but my *fishing-rod*, should I let that go? All the varied emotions swung to and fro through my bosom much quicker than they could be written.

“Hugh! I say,” again exclaimed Nat, “I say I want your fishing-rod. Go and get it, I say.”

“Can’t let my fishing-rod on the Sabbath-day,” at last I had courage to say.

"You may have it whenever you wish on week days."

It was out! My stand was taken! My principles were declared! Nor had I time to notice Nat's angry and astonished look, or to mind the awful curse which issued from his mouth, for my aunt at that moment screamed from the pantry window—

"Well, Hugh, I suppose by your looks you want to go to meeting."

"Yes, ma'am; I never stay at home."

"Well, your uncle has got a little business to see to, in the morning. He'll take the wagon, and we'll go. Bill, tell Jem to wash the wagon-wheels."

Meanwhile I turned upon my heel and hied away to the wood-house chamber.

The church was nearly three miles off, up at "the Corner," as it was called. As the people were scattered far and wide, and often came from the distance of two, three,

and four miles, they remained in and about the church during the intermission, which lasted not quite an hour. Sunday-schools had not then been established there. The Sabbath passed off more Sabbath-like than the morning promised, and by half-past three in the afternoon we reached home again. Home! But it did not seem much like home to me. On driving into the yard, we spied Bill and Nat coming in an opposite direction, after a seemingly successful day's operation.

"Hallo, mother!" shouted Nat, "we must have these trout for supper."

"Cooking! cooking!" complained my aunt; "I should think to-morrow morning might do as well." The boys declared they should be cooked—trout they'd have for supper, anyhow. My uncle chimed in, "Cook 'em, cook 'em, and not make a fuss."

Jumping out of the wagon, I looked

wistfully round for Jem, but he was nowhere to be seen. Left to myself, what a hungry desire did I feel for a book!

"Aunt," I asked, "are there no books here?" following her as she went to pick up some chips to kindle the fire.

"Books, child! you've asked me that question a dozen times. Books! what do you want of books?"

She was warm, and that, perhaps, made her fretful. I turned off through a side-door in the wood-house, and bent my way across the field to an old apple-tree, under which I sat down—and wept. When the horn sounded for supper, I went into the house and took my seat at table, though with but little appetite for food. Two trout were lying on my plate.

"Hugh likes trout," said Bill, slyly.

"Hugh likes trout, if they a'n't caught Sunday," I said to myself, eying the two

fishes. After eating a slice of bread and butter, I laid down my knife and leaned back in my chair. In fact, I had no heart to eat at all.

"Why don't you eat, child?" asked my aunt; "you must needs be hungry. Taste of the trout, they are proper good."

"*I* don't think he deserves any," exclaimed Nat, in any thing but an undertone.

"I don't know why he does not, I am sure," answered the mother.

"*I* do," said Nat, scowling at me.

"Hugh don't like Sunday trout; he's for having trout, fishing-tackle, and every thing else keep the Sabbath, sing psalms and do all such things," said Bill.

"And there he is in the right of it," replied my aunt, keeping on my side.

"What's all this talk about?" at last asked my uncle roughly, looking round on us boys.

"Hugh is setting himself up for law and gospel," exclaimed Nat.

"He won't eat a trout that is caught on Sunday," said Bill.

"How is that, Hugh?" asked my uncle.

"I am not hungry, sir."

"How is it about the trout, I say?" he asked in a testy tone. "What right have you, I should like to know, to set yourself up for law and gospel here, in this house?"

I looked up at him, surprised.

"How is it about the trout? Why don't you eat what is put on your plate?"

"I am not hungry, sir," I answered meekly.

"Not hungry! That's not the point!"

His nose began to look very red.

"What, I say, are you and the boys wrangling about?"

"I did not know we were wrangling, uncle."

"What does all this amount to?" asked my aunt, beginning to look disturbed, and casting an anxious glance towards her husband. In fact, Uncle Hugh of one time was not the uncle Hugh of another. "If Hugh has done his supper, that is enough."

"But I want an answer. What is it about the trouting, I say?" looking at me fiercely.

"Hugh would not let me have his fishing-rod to go trouting, because 'tis Sunday," said Nat with a sneer.

"And he wouldn't go with us, because it's Sunday," added Bill.

"No, nor eat a trout, because they broke the Sabbath by being caught," shouted Nat, with a loud, boisterous laugh.

"Is that so?" asked Uncle Hugh, set-

ting his eye on me. "Are you such a fellow as all that comes to? Is it so?"

I was afraid to answer.

"Hugh, I say, are you all that?"

At last, I tremblingly answered, "Yes, sir, I am just what Nat and Bill said. I was brought up to think so."

"Odds! bobs!" exclaimed my uncle excitedly, "I don't stand that from any boy. Get out of my sight," looking angrily at me, and raising his voice to a high key. "Odds! bobs! you set yourself up here for law and gospel!"

"Hush, hush," said my aunt. "What is all this noise about? Hugh has said or done no harm. He was asked his opinion, and he honestly gave it."

Meanwhile, I left the table.

"Who does the boy set himself up to be?" said my uncle in an angry tone, as I went out into the pantry. "The lazy,

snivelling dog! He has not earned the salt of his porridge since he's been here! My word for it, he'll never be any thing! No use to nobody! The lazy, snivelling dog."

My uncle's morning business had not gone according to his mind. Indeed, every thing seemed to have gone wrong with him since our return from meeting, until the dark clouds which had been gathering over his spirit burst upon my poor head with all fury. As I afterwards learned, such storms were not infrequent; but this first one which I had witnessed chilled and frightened me. Straying out into the yard, the first object which caught my eye, sitting on the large flat stone before the door, was Jem, who caught me by the hand, jerking it up and down with a knowing and approving nod.

"Pluck!" whispered Jem, in a low, em-

phatic tone. Then catching up the two huge milkpails that stood beside him, he set off full speed to the cow-yard. I followed him.

"Oh! this a'n't like my own home," I said pitifully, squatting down by Jem's side, as he sat milking old Whiteface. "I don't know what I shall do? I almost wish I was a trout, swimming beautifully about in some lonely little brook. Uncle is dreadfully angry with me."

"Supposing you was a trout, maybe Ned might catch you. So you see every stick has its crook. There's never any use in wishing. You've got to take things as they come, bitter or sweet," said Jem, milking with all his might.

Jem's suggestion cured me of ever wishing to be a trout. "But uncle's dreadfully angry with me," I added; "and I don't know exactly what for, either, nor how he came to be."

“He has such spells,” whispered Jem. “It is a bad spirit. He most commonly keeps it corked up, but once in a while he lets it fly, and then, says I, there’s a storm for somebody. It will leave him to-night, and he’ll be Uncle Hugh again to-morrow.”

I looked inquiringly at him. What did he mean? He said no more, but went on milking. “They are all angry with me: Bill and Nat too. My aunt is not. But, Jem,” I said, “I could not do otherwise, *nohow*; it is just as mother would like me to do.” And the thought of my mother’s kind and gentle face was like to break my heart. “Oh!” I sighed, “what am I to come to! and what will become of me, Jem?”

“Don’t feel bad,” said Jem, turning round and smiling on me, “don’t feel bad, Hugh. You’ll come out well enough if you keep on as you’ve begun, honouring

your parents and obeying God. God himself will take care of you. Only have pluck, Hugh, only have pluck; and all will be well. Only think of Daniel's pluck! He wasn't going to mind the king and fall down to worship the image, if 'twas made of gold. No, he said he wouldn't no-how, so the king put him into the lions' den. Did the lions eat him up? No, indeed! God took care of Daniel because he minded him rather than the king. Daniel walked straight in among the lions. He was not afraid. No, Hugh, he had pluck! That's it, Hugh! Stand up like a man, and hold to your principles till you see they are wrong."

Jem's words comforted me very much, so I said, "You've been to meeting to-day, Jem, I know."

"Yes," answered Jem, "I always calculate to go; but I don't go to that great

white meeting-house at the Corner: our meetings are held in a little brick school-house, off by Pilot Mountain."

Oh, my! How I wanted to go to his meeting—Jem's meeting, in a little brick school-house by Pilot Mountain.

"Mayn't I? Mayn't I go with you to *your* meeting, Jem?" I asked earnestly, for I seemed to feel that his meeting must be like my mother's meeting; Jem talked so good, and so much like her.

"That's as the folks say," answered Jem. "Maybe they'll let you, sometimes."

Here was a bright spot.

The first thing I did the next morning was to get out my fishing-rod.

"What's that for?" asked Jem, who was churning.

"Going to offer it to Nat."

"Do you think Nat deserves it, when he tried to make a difficulty?" asked Jem.

Oh, dear ! I lay thinking of that very thing in the night. I did not feel like offering it to him, but my mother used to say show yourself a friend, if people are ever so unfriendly. It was not because I did not want to lend my rod, but I did not want it to be used on Sunday : so, as I wanted Nat to understand how it was, I thought I ought to offer it to him on Monday.

I saw Nat by the well, and hurried down to him, rod in hand. "Here's my rod," I said, timidly holding it out to him. "I'd just as lief you would have it as not."

What did Nat do but snatch it from my hand, and throw it with all violence across the yard !

"I don't want your old fishing-rod !" he exclaimed angrily.

Such was the state of affairs in my Uncle Hugh's family.

Going to School.

DURING the summer, all the boys whose labour was worth any thing on the farm were kept at home; so I did not go to school until winter. When the winter-school began, I attended also. The school-house was quite two miles from my uncle's, over by Pilot Mountain,—the very same little brick school-house where Jem went to meeting! It was a very pleasant walk in summer, but a very bleak and cold one in winter. I was thankful to go to school again. My books looked very precious to me, and I took hold of my studies with the best appetite in the world. The master, a young man from college, was kind-hearted and intelligent. He loved the

boys, and the boys loved him. There is no lack of real desire to improve, nor of earnest, thorough study, in a country winter-school. Opportunities for improvement are few and far between. The older youth having the opportunity to attend school not more than three or four months in a year, those months are diligently heeded while they do last.

The class in which I was placed was composed of nearly twenty boys and girls, most of them older than myself. The class, as a class, made a very poor figure in grammar and spelling, which determined the master to offer a prize of a silver pencil-case to the one who made the greatest improvement in those two branches. As he held up the silver pencil-case, oh, how it glistened! A beautiful, new, silver pencil-case for our own! Now grammar had never been one of my

favourite studies. Indeed, I used to wish I was a king, just to make a bonfire of all the grammars in the world. I wished the pencil could be given to the best arithmetic scholars, or the best in geography, or something more interesting than grammar: but grammar and spelling were the branches for which the prize was to be given, so there was nothing for us to do but to study. The worst of it, with me, was, I had not the book which the other boys had.

One morning, towards the last of December, Jem said he guessed there would be no school that day, at least for me. The fine snow was already falling, and every now and then a gust of wind whirled it in eddies through the air. I always got up with Jem, whose first duty was to make a roaring fire in the great kitchen fireplace. By the light of it I used, some-

times, to get an hour's study before daylight.

My uncle was then from home. After breakfast, the boys, Nat and Bill, concluded it was of no use to go into the woods that day. On pleasant winter-days, the men all went to the forest to cut down and chop up wood. They meant to keep snug by the fire that day, they said, and play checkers or fox-and-geese. I put on my great-coat,—rather tight and short for me, for it was its third winter, and I had, of late, begun to grow very fast.

“Hugh, I don't think you'd better go to school, to-day,” said my aunt; “the wind howls dreadfully, and it's a long way there.”

“The master wanted us never to miss, and he's going to explain all about verbs to-day,” I said. “I was afraid, once, I should never understand about active-

transitive and active-intransitive verbs ; but now I am determined to try,—besides, I haven't the book they study in. I learn out of Joe Price's."

"What nonsense!" exclaimed Bill, who was fixing some corn to parch. "What good will it ever do? I'd never bother my head with it, and I used to tell the master so."

"It helps us to talk and write properly," I answered.

"I wonder how much wiser Hugh will ever be for it?" added Nat.

"It will do me good to *try*, though,—won't it? Mother used to say there is as much in trying to overcome difficulties, as there is in actually getting the thing we aim at."

"Oh, your ears!" said my aunt; "you must tie them up, or they'll freeze;" and she pulled an old silk pocket-handkerchief

out of her pocket, which she put over my head, and tied it under the chin.

“He a’n’t warm enough yet,” said Jem, who just then came in with an armful of wood. “It is nipping cold. It is my advice to Hugh not to go to school to-day.”

“But, Jem, to-day’s the day the master’s going to explain something; and if he can go there and explain, I’m sure the boys ought to go and hear.”

My aunt just then thought of a blue frock, which Bill had outgrown while it was yet as good as new, and this she went to get.

“That’s it!” said Jem, “that’s it!” So over my plaid coat, shrunk on all sides, she threw the coarse blue frock, which came over my knees, and fell loosely over the body. Thus armed and equipped, I set forth for my two miles walk.

“Better stay at home and snap corn

with us," said Bill, as I went out at the door.

"I wish, with all my heart, he would!" added my aunt. Jem went out of the gate with me, and followed me with his eye until I made the turn towards Pilot Mountain. What a blusterer met me at the turn! The north wind hurled troops of snow-flakes right into my eyes, nose and mouth, and, for a few moments, I was almost blinded. "Oh!" I cried, bending to the blast; "but General Washington's soldiers had a worse time than this,—they had not warm clothes on;" and my heart kept warm with thankfulness for the blue frock and silk kerchief. "I've got nothing but the wind and snow to fight with; they had an *enemy*—a real enemy; wind and snow are not enemies—not *real* enemies!" although, just at that moment, I could not see clearly that they were real

friends. On I went, until I came to a piece of woods, which partially sheltered me from the driving blast. Here I stopped to take breath. No living thing was in sight: no boy, no man, no sleigh. At other times, this was a much-travelled road; now, the snow was fast drifting into heaps. The pine-trees cracked and groaned under the storm, and every thing wore a wild and dreary look.

“If I only had Joe Price’s book at home, I don’t believe I should have come,” I began to say, my face smarting with the cold. I almost dreaded to emerge from the shelter of the woods. Whenever we were disposed to find fault, be discontented or grow faint-hearted, my mother used to incite us on by contrasting our situation with that of those who were worse off than ourselves. “Well,” (I now remember saying to myself,) “this a’n’t so bad as

Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in the fiery furnace. God took care of them, and he will take care of me. It isn't so bad as Napoleon going over the Alps, when the avalanches came tumbling down the mountain-side, burying up his men. 'Tis not so bad as being at sea and the ship going to pieces!" And with these examples, I summoned up my flagging courage and went on my way. It was tough enough.

"If I only had Joe Price's book, I don't believe I should have come. Oh, dear! but I have not Joe Price's book, nor any book that they learn the parsing and spelling lessons in! Uncle Hugh might get me one—oh, dear!" and with this I sank down behind the stone-wall to take breath. I thought of my mother. She was in the cold ground, and I almost wished I was by her side. How lonely

and desolate I felt ! How cold and frowning was every thing !

At last, the brick school-house appeared in sight. I straightened up and began to run ; but my hands were too much benumbed to hold up my blue frock, and down I tumbled into a drift. "It is not an avalanche," I said, scrambling up and making my way as fast as I could, until I reached the school-house door. How glad was I at the sight of it ! I seized the latch ! It was fastened, and the snow was drifting against it. "Oh, mercy !" I cried,—and well might I have cried for mercy,—for my strength and warmth were now completely exhausted. The school-house locked and empty ! The storm was now getting into my soul, when the door was opened from within, and the round, warm face of Joe Price himself peeped through the open crack.

"It's Hugh!" he cried in a friendly tone,—“Hugh Fisher,—and he can't but just get out of the bank. We locked the door because the wind forced it open. Oh! Hugh is as cold as he can be.”

The master soon appeared. “My poor boy!” he said, drawing me in and helping off my outside gear. I could scarcely move nor speak. But the fire sparkled, the flames swept up the broad chimney's throat. The master spoke kind and comforting words to me. The scholars all looked glad to see me. Oh, how good and delightful did that school-room seem to me! The storm without appeared to die away as the pleasant warmth stole through my limbs. It came from friendly faces as well as the friendly fire.

The school was quite small in numbers: instead of fifty, there were twenty-one, and those mostly from the neighbouring

farms. Of our own class, there were nine. The master soon gave us a recess, for I found my walk had consumed far more time than usual. After the boys had collected around me, and then dispersed out of doors for a frolic among the drifts, he came and sat down beside me. I still kept the first chair I sank into on reaching the room. "Well, Hugh," said the master, "there is no boy here who came as far as you did. You are a courageous fellow! What made you venture so, in a day like this, eh?"

"Oh, sir," I answered, "I did not want to miss hearing about the verbs. Then, 'tis not as though I had a book of my own to study the parsing-lessons out of, at home. I haven't got a book—I told Uncle Hugh. I study out of Joe Price's book—he lets me. I have to study when I get the best chance, you see."

“What did your Uncle Hugh say, when you asked him?”

“He said, ‘Odds bobs! I might take Nat’s and Bill’s books, or go without.’ They have not got this book; so I do the best I can.”

I can never forget the very tender look which the master bestowed upon me.

“And you are an orphan?” he said.

“Yes, sir,” I answered. “I suppose I have got to make my way in the world alone. I always wanted to get an education. My father and mother both meant me to have one—but”—

“But what, Hugh?” asked the master.

“Things are so altered now, sir!” I suppose I said it mournfully, for the thought of it always made me sad, in spite of myself. “Uncle Hugh thinks it is worse than folly to get an education. He never will hear to a word of it, I ex-

pect; but I am willing to work for it, or shift almost any way."

"Well, my boy," said the master, patting me on the head as he arose to call the school to order, "well, Hugh, where there's a will, there's a way."

We had a very pleasant school that day. Joe Price and I studied together. The master made us understand about transitive verbs as clear as day, and new light was thrown upon my mind about decimal fractions. There were fewer of us there, and when the class went to recite, there was time to ask the master a great many more questions. Ever after that, I understood decimal fractions and transitive verbs. Oh, it was so pleasant to study! I did not mind that dreadful walk. It cost much less than it was worth. I learned a great deal that stormy day. Then, somehow or other, the friendly feel-

ings of the boys did me good. Uncle Hugh's family were not a very kindly-spoken family, although, perhaps, they were quite willing to do for each other when worse came to worst. They were very different from my father's family.

But the day wore away, and fast enough, too, and as the early shades came on in the afternoon, I began to think what a tough job it would be to get home again. After school was dismissed and the boys were scrambling for tippets, caps and coats, and Joe Price was urging me to go to his house, which I never thought for a moment I could do, the master came up, and laying his hand on my shoulder, said, "Hugh, you must come home with me to-night. I cannot think of letting you go home such a tempestuous night as this: •—you would, in all probability, lose your way and perish,—it is very much drifted."

Could I? Should I? I was sure I should like to do it.

"Will they not scold at me for not coming?"

"I'll see to that," said the master.
"No, they shall not scold at you."

So I was going home with the master. As we all walked out together into the still stormy air, how thankful I was that the long, lonely walk to Uncle Hugh's was not before me. Joe Price and I kept a little while together, then he stopped, and I went on to the next house, where the master boarded. He took me into the kitchen, where the family were,—Mr. Drew and Mrs. Drew, and two or three daughters, and a married son and his wife and the baby. He told them I was Hugh Fisher, and how I braved the storm and came to school, and how, when I had reached the school-house, I sank, almost

exhausted, into a snow-drift by the door. And then Mrs. Drew took me by the hand, and said she was very glad the master brought me to their house, and placed a little green chair by the fire, for me to sit down in and warm my feet. Dear Mrs. Drew! she seemed to speak like my mother. Then Mr. Drew said, "Ah, yes; I remember this little fellow's father: he was as brave as a lion. He's just like him—got the turn of his eye. Well, Hugh, I hope you'll be as good a man as your father. Your father, when he was a boy, was one of the best boys anywhere about."

Oh, what good words were those! Nobody here had ever spoken so of my father before. Uncle and Aunt Hugh had spoken of him, but in such a way that I would rather they had not spoken.

I could not help drawing my chair close

by Mr. Drew, and asking him to tell me more about my father.

After a good supper, on which we sought God's blessing, the great family Bible was laid upon the table before Mr. Drew, who put it before the master to read. The master read a chapter, a hymn was sung, and then we all kneeled down and good Mr. Drew led in prayer. How he thanked God for his mercies, and how he prayed for any poor wanderers who might be out on a night like this! I could not help being afraid somebody was in those pine-woods that were groaning and cracking in the storm. When we were seated, Miss Clara Drew came and said, in a low voice, "My dear, is any thing the matter with you? Do you feel quite well?"

Until that moment, I was scarcely conscious of the tears on my cheeks. "Oh!" I answered, trying to suppress a sob,

“oh! no; I am very well—only it seems so much like home here.”

This was the first time I had seen family-worship since my mother's death. It was like a soft south wind to my soul.

Then Mr. Drew asked me to come and sit by him, and he talked to me a good while about my father, and asked all about our family,—my mother, Henry and Agnes. It was so pleasant to talk about them and not feel afraid.

I do not know what time in the evening it was, when Cato, the watch-dog in the wood-house, set up a terrible barking.

“Somebody's coming!” said Mr. Drew, starting and looking round. “Joshua, had you not better go and see what the matter is?”

Joshua was his married son. He put his book quickly down, and was going to

the door, when a thundering knock was heard.

"Somebody in distress, I fear,—poor creature!" said Mrs. Drew, following her son, who opened the door.

"Where's the master?—I want to see the master!" said a voice whose tones were anxious, though it was a man's voice, and one that sounded very natural to me. The master heard himself called, and hurried out.

"Do you know any thing of Hugh Fisher?" exclaimed the voice. "The fellow's pluck could not carry him through a night like this."

All of us who remained in the kitchen were silent, listening to the talk in the entry. "It's Jem!" I cried, jumping up. "It's Jem!" and I ran also to the door. "Here I am, Jem!" I shouted, putting my head out by the master's.

“Thank God!” exclaimed Jem, “alive and well, too!” Jem looked like the storming himself. He was on horseback, a buffalo-skin tied round his body, and his seal-skin cap drawn all over his ears. His horse was prancing and panting, kicking the drift that was making against the door in every direction, while the flakes and the wind swept around Jem, whirling and eddying in the wildest manner possible.

“Come in! Come in!” called out Mrs. Drew from the kitchen.

“No, thank ye,” answered Jem. “Well, Hugh, you’re alive and well! When you didn’t come, and I went a long piece hallooing, to meet you and help you along, and when your aunt began to be fidgety, the boys said they guessed you had got snug quarters somewhere; but we couldn’t be sure of that,—says I: I can’t go to bed and not know but Hugh is in a snow-bank.

I can't go to sleep, no-how. So I got neighbour Colt's horse, and took the dogs, and we kept up a hallooing all along,—as may-be you might be by the way, under the stone wall, or lost your way in the pines. I could not hear of you anywhere; so I came to the school-master, to find out about you. Now, Hugh, are you going to get on behind me, and go home?"

"No, no!" exclaimed Mr. Joshua Drew. "A thousand thanks to you, Jem! God bless you! but the fellow is in snug quarters; he'd better not think of leaving us, such a night as this."

"Oh, no!" echoed the master. "Hugh is going to stay with me to-night."

"Do, Jem, come in and warm you," said Mrs. Drew. "Do!"

"No, thank ye!" answered Jem. "I shall go home enough sight lighter than I came. Hugh is safe!" He turned his

horse's head, called the dogs, and Jem was soon out of sight. We all ran, shivering, back to the kitchen.

"That Jem is one of the best-hearted fellows in the world!" said old Mr. Drew.

"Yes, sir; Jem is like our folks,—as it used to be at home!" I responded eagerly,—that being my highest standard for judging the good principles and friendly warmth of people. "I don't know what I should do, if it wasn't for Jem. He talks with me, and lets me talk to him." And for a moment I was almost sorry I did not pay Jem for his trouble and kindness, by getting up behind him and going home.

"Ought I?" I asked the master, "ought I not to have kept him company home, when he was so good as to come after me?"

"Oh, no!" answered the master; "he's very thankful you are anchored in such a safe harbour."

After a pleasant chat among the elders, by whom I sat and listened, the master asked me to go to his room with him. How cheerful it looked! There was a bright, open fire, a large round stand full of books, with pens, ink and paper, his plump bed in one corner,—but the books! It did my eyes good to see some books again.

“Oh!” I exclaimed delightedly, “it seems like home!—those books!” and I stood gazing at the table with wonder and gladness.

“Sit down and look over them,” said the master. “Here is the Reader, which your class parse and spell from; though I am glad Joe Price is so friendly as to let you study in his, it is better you should have one, and I’ll lend you this, Hugh; you’ll be careful of it, I know.”

“Yes, indeed, sir!” Then I ventured to tell him again, how I wanted to get an

education; how my father and mother both meant I should have one; how I liked to study, and how hungry I felt, sometimes, after a book; how, also, Uncle Hugh had a very mean opinion of books and education and such things. This matter of getting an education had begun to look very dark; how was I, then, encouraged by the master's saying that, in this country, it was not a very difficult thing to gain a good education, provided one had a real mind to it, and was ready to work for it! If that was all that was wanted, the matter certainly looked brighter. As the master led me to speak of myself and my father, I told him father thought that young boys had better learn thoroughly the Latin grammar, and before his death I had begun it; after his death, I had no teacher, but I wished now I could take it up again.

“Do you think you shall like it?” asked the master. “It is hard and dry.”

“I know it is, and I never liked grammar at all; but father said it must be grappled with, if one meant to be thoroughly educated, and the sooner the better; so, if it has got to be done, I had as lief do it now as any time.”

The master looked at me and said “that was all true; and if I really had a strong mind to study Latin grammar, and thought I could persevere in it, he would lend me one, and I might recite to him.”

I hardly knew what to say. All I did say was, “Oh, it seems like home!” After a pause, I added, “I have learned to-morrow’s lesson in Joe Price’s book. Mayn’t I begin my Latin to-night?” Then the master set me a lesson, and he began to study: so did I.

The lesson was not learned before I grew sleepy, and began to nod over my book. I rubbed my eyes and pinched myself to keep awake, for I felt very much ashamed of being sleepy, when I had the privilege of studying with the master. Sleepy I could not help being, in spite of all my trying not to be, and at last I fell fast asleep with my head on the open leaf of the Latin grammar. The master came and laid his hand on my shoulder. "Oh, sir!" said I, as I started up: "I did not mean to."

"It is quite late in the evening, and you had better go to bed now, Hugh," said the master. "You can sleep on the farther side of the bed. Warm your feet first." The master betook himself to his book again, and I to warming my feet.

And now the old question was once more revived, Shall I kneel down and pray,—

he a good and learned man, and the master, too, and I nothing but a little boy?

This question had once been thoroughly settled in the wood-house chamber, many months before: it now came up, but without any distracting doubts or fears. To be sure, I felt some embarrassment about it, because he was the master; but I had no mind, even for a moment, of giving up my prayer. Perhaps I lingered a little longer near the fire on account of his presence, but at last I went, as was my custom, and kneeled down by the bedside. I was sure I had a great deal to thank God for, and it made me very humble and tender-hearted to think what friends God had raised up for a poor orphan-boy, and how thankful I ought to be for a part of the master's nice bed, when I might have got lost among the pines. The gusts howled down the chimney, and I shivered to think of it.

Then undressing and creeping into bed, I popped my head out from the pillow, and cast a glance around the room.

There sat the master before the fire, and the flames danced on the walls; there was the round stand, full of books—big ones and little ones,—and the bed felt so good! It was not a bit like the wood-house chamber at Uncle Hugh's, where the snow kept driving in through the cracks. Oh, it seemed like home!

Then the master's kind words about getting an education; then the Reader he lent me, so that Joe Price need not be annoyed any more; then the Latin lessons,—oh, it seemed like home! And you may well suppose Hugh Fisher fell asleep more peacefully and delightfully than on any night since his mother's death; and if he dreamed at all, he had pleasant dreams then.

Upon the whole, his perseverance, or

“pluck,” as Jem called it, turned out pretty well, though he was almost ready to give up when among the pines ; and I believe it is almost always so,—that perseverance in a good cause secures its own reward. When good people or good causes fail, it is because somebody gets discouraged and gives up. Why did not the Israelites, led on by Moses and Aaron, go directly up and enter the promised land ? Because the spies were frightened, and discouraged the people. God was willing enough, but they gave up, and then were left to wander forty long years in the wilderness.

The next morning, the clouds had all gone ; the sky was of a clear, deep blue ; the sun shone beautifully upon the drifts and fields of pure snow.

“The drifts were hanging by the sill,
The eaves, the door ;

The haystack had become a hill,
All covered o'er.
E'en the old posts that held the bars,
And the old gate,
Forgetful of their wintry wars
And age sedate,
High-capped and plumed, like white hussars,
Stood there in state!"

Perhaps there are some boys who might inquire, "Well, I wonder who ever got the prize—that silver pencil-case—which the master offered to the parsing and spelling-class? Hugh Fisher, I dare say."

No, Hugh Fisher did not get it; his friend, Joe Price, won the pencil-case, and Hugh was very glad that he did. There were some who grumbled and declared the master was partial, but almost the whole school considered, with him, that Joe Price deserved it, if anybody did.

Lin Academy.

THE lapse of two years brought several changes into my uncle's family. Uncle Hugh himself seemed dying by a premature decay. Another person had been added to our family—Alexander Dale—a boy about my own age, and a nephew to my aunt. Dale was a greater favourite with his cousins than I had ever been, and I soon found that my staying was not much desired by some members of the family. My aunt was always kind, and, though the temper of my uncle had become softened by sickness and age, the boys ruled the house, and it was plainly to be seen they meant to rule me out of it.

Nor was I sorry. I only wanted the liberty of trying to do for myself; but, as my uncle had sheltered me when I stood in need of a home, I hesitated about leaving him just as my labour upon the farm had become valuable. A casual conversation, which I happened to overhear, between Nat and his father, (which it is not needful to relate,) determined me upon opening the subject to my uncle. I took the first opportunity of doing so, and he received it kindly.

“Well, Hugh, and what do you mean to do?” I almost shrunk from annoying his feelings, by answering that I meant to try to do what my parents always meant me to do,—get an education, and afterwards I should decide upon my further course. I did say so, however. He faintly smiled, and said,

“The old subject again! Well, you

hold on to it as a hawk does to a chicken. I've no objection. Do as you like. Young folks have their way now more than they used to. Have you got any plan afoot, Hugh? You know I can't do much for you, Hugh."

I told him I did not expect any thing of him, and I thanked him for all he had done for me during the last two years. Tears came into the old man's eyes. I then unfolded to him a little plan which the story will unfold to you. He nodded his head.

"Well, it's all uncertainty, but I make no doubt you'll get along. There's considerable stuff about you, Hugh, when you set out."

The interview issued far better than I expected.

During the next week, there was to be a great training. When the day arrived,

some of the neighbours' boys, with my cousins and Jem and myself, set off at an early hour for the training-field, which was about three miles distant. There was enough to see,—the tents, the booths, the tables, the soldiers, the coming in of wag-gons and carriages, the passing to and fro of men, boys, children and women not a few. To quiet people, as we were, there was not much of interest; though, alas! on the training-fields of old times there was much to regret and avoid. My companions soon found others, and with them they went off, while I (more intent upon the main object which I had in view) soon left the field and took the road to L——, lying distant between two and three miles. On the road were many coming to the show.

“Wrong way,” said one and another as I walked on. “You’re going the wrong way.”

“Right!” was my answer,—“all right!”

I found myself at last entering the main street of L——, with pretty white houses on either side; lilac-trees, poplars and elms, with here and there a maple, overshadowing the way, while neat grass-plats, bordered with flowers, gave a tasteful air to the dwellings. The academy soon came in sight—“The Lion Academy,” as it was labelled in large gilt letters. There was no mistake. I stopped before it with a kind of pride, and I felt like making a low bow to it. I saw the playground and the beaten paths of the scholars. Turning round for a stopping-place in order to rest, I saw a pump in the yard. I went in, sat down on the trough, drank from the spout, bathed my feet, and taking down my shoes, which had been slung on my back during the journey, put them on, preparatory to going to find myself a place.

Four dough-nuts were in my pocket, two of which served to satisfy my craving appetite. The nearly six miles had tired me; and my spirits, now that I was actually on the spot, were not as elevated as when I set out.

“What can *I* do?” as a thought of my forlorn condition came despondingly over me.

“You do? What can you *not* do, if you try?” said a voice in answer. “You are not going to give up your education just at the outset, are you?”

“No, I am not!” I said to myself, starting up. “An education I must and will have, at all events, if God will let me.” Coming out of the yard, I looked long and wistfully up and down the street. Pretty white houses enough, but scarcely a person to be seen. “Well, I’ll dash into it,” I said. “I’ll go opposite: it would be con-

venient to live so near school." So to the house opposite I directed my steps, and knocked at the green side-door. An old man, leaning upon a stout staff, answered to the call.

"Do you want a chore-boy?" said I.

"What?" cried the old man.

I stated the case, adding that I wanted a place where I could work for my board and go to the academy. The old man looked hard at me, as if he but half comprehended the import of my speech. I began again.

"No!" said he, "no, we've got nothing for you,—nothing for such folks,—better go to work!" and he slammed the door in my face.

"Nothing for such people!" I muttered. But he could not hear, and with that my sudden gust of resentment vanished.

Another two-story house was attempted.

I knocked, and was answered by a young girl, to whom my wants were made known. "No," answered she with a pleasant smile, "we don't want anybody; but I guess you may find a place at the third house, down from the academy—there!" pointing with her finger. "Mr. Sawyer lives there, and he's been wanting a boy."

I am sure my looks, as well as my lips, expressed my thanks. Her manner was very kind. Away I trudged. Mr. Sawyer, alas! had just engaged a boy. Bending my steps to the tavern, the piazza of which was now deserted by all loungers,—having all gone to the training-field,—I sat down to think, fixing my eyes on the academy. "Only three times! It is worth trying for three times three, and three times that," I said stoutly to myself. In a few more moments, and I was fast asleep on the wooden bench. It was a

refreshing nap, for, when the arrival of the mail-coach wheeling up before the door aroused me, I sprang up as bright as in the early morning. The coach-door opened. "Colonel, you stop here," said the driver, when a smart-looking gentleman and a spruce boy of about my own age jumped out. His trunks were taken off, and placed on the piazza.

"He's going to the academy, may-be," thought I. The boy marched to and fro, with his shining boots and glazed cap and large black bow fastened to his collar; at last, he said, "That's the academy, I suppose?"

"Yes," I answered, as there was nobody else near to whom the question could be addressed. "Are you going to it?"

"I suppose so, though I have no great liking to academies or books or any such things."

“Oh,” thought I, “change places! Do change places with me!”

“Lovell!” cried his father, coming to the door and looking round. “Come! where are you? We must go directly and see the preceptor, because I want to leave when the next coach comes along.”

The father and son walked off.

“That’s Colonel Laws,” whispered the hostler to me. “The greatest man hereabouts. He’s as rich as a Jew, and has been to the legislature I don’t know how often.”

That Colonel Laws! Oh, yes, Colonel Laws was *the* man of that region, and that was Lovell Laws, his son! I almost envied him, as my eyes followed their retreating figures. “And me! and me! no father to care for me so!”

“Wonder if I shall ever know any thing more of Lovell Laws? Never, unless I

get along better than I have done;" and with that I bristled up and went down the steps of the piazza.

"Here! Where are you bound? You don't belong hereabouts, do you?" asked the hostler. I told him what I wanted—to live out for my board, and go to the academy.

"Zounds!" cried the hostler, "we want just such a boy. Major Otis, that keeps this tavern, was asking about a boy but just yesterday. I don't know how it will be about the going-to-school part. He's gone into the training-field, but he'll be home to dinner."

"But the going-to-school part is just the part I want to accomplish," said I. "I am trying to get into the academy."

"Well, never mind; stop here till the major comes, for he's the only person I know of who wants a chore-boy;" and so,

upon the whole, I concluded to apply to the major.

After a while, Colonel Laws and his son came back.

"Hostler," said the colonel, "here! I want my son's trunk carried over to the preceptor's." The hostler seemed to be the only person about, every one else having gone to the training-field.

"Yes, sir." Then turning to me, he asked if I would not like the job of wheeling it over. Yes; I was always glad of something to do. He brought me the wheelbarrow and helped me on with the trunk, and told me where to go: and thus I earned a shilling, dropped into my hand by Colonel Laws himself. "This will help me buy a book," I thought.

In due time, Major Otis came home. He concluded to take me for three months, to earn my board by work out of school-

hours. That matter was then settled. Now I thought I would go to the preceptor, and see about getting admitted. He was just coming out of his gate. I stopped before him, my heart beating. It was a moment or two before I could speak.

“I want to attend the Lion Academy,” I said.

“Very well!” answered the preceptor, “it is not yet full. We can allow a few more admissions.”

“What are the terms, sir?”

“Four dollars a quarter.”

“Is there not some work to be done for the academy,—sweeping, building fires and shovelling paths?—I should be glad to get a little such work to do to pay for my quarter, as I have to get my education on my own hook.”

The preceptor looked earnestly at me, asking me where I came from and where I

was staying. I told him how I had been so fortunate as to get a place.

"Have you no friends to lend you a helping hand?" asked he.

"My father and mother are both dead," I replied. "I have nobody to help me, unless Jem does—a fellow that has been working where I have been—and he works out."

The preceptor then told me I might commence school, with the rest, the day after to-morrow, and he would see what I could do.

The next matter then was settled, and now I must go back to the training-field and get a chance from there to ride home, if I could.

"You'll be here the day after to-morrow, then?" said Major Otis.

"Yes, sir," answered I, and began my homeward march.

On reaching the training-field, the first person I saw was Jem, who, I believe, was on the look-out for me. I told him all that had happened. His broad mouth was extended, as nearly as it could be, from ear to ear.

“Pluck!” cried Jem. It was Jem who told me about Lion Academy, and he also offered to help me in any way he could. “I’ll lend you a few of the shiners,” whispered he, grasping my hand. “You deserve to get along.”

Uncle Hugh listened with much interest to my day’s adventures, occasionally interrupting me—“Colonel Laws; ay, I know him!” “Major Otis; ay, I’ve traded with him!”

When I took my leave of him, the second morning after, he slipped a silver dollar into my hand. “Don’t say any thing about it, Hugh,—I wish I had more.

You've been a good boy—a very good boy. God bless you, Hugh!" And the sick old man rubbed his coarse shirt-sleeve across his eyes.

A pedlar, with a green wagon, spent the night at the neighbouring farm-house, and Jem agreed with him to take me over to the town of L——, which happened to be the next place whither the pedlar was going.

Thursday forenoon, at eleven o'clock, I took my seat with about fifty other lads, in the large school-room of the Lion Academy.



Perplexities.

My situation at Major Otis's afforded me ample employment out of school; and much of the work was of a nature that wore out and defaced my clothes. In fact, I had but two decent suits, both much the worse for wear, and both every month growing more and more unsuited to my increasing size. My aunt gave me a new blue frock, to wear over my clothes, which greatly helped to save them. Mrs. Otis was a very kind landlady. She took a motherly interest in me, and promised, of her own accord, as soon as she had time, to have a tailoress to make over some second-hand clothes, left, a long time before,

by a lodger, for my best suit. The major was very particular about having his work done just at the time it was wanted, for which nobody could blame him.

As for books, I managed much better than I expected. The preceptor let the boys have books, by paying so much a term for the use of them; and this greatly helped out the two dollars which my purse contained, and which, in fact, was my all: only Jem stood ready with his "shiners," as he called them, in case of any emergency. I soon found there was a scholar who took care of the building, so that my tuition was still unprovided for. On again speaking to the preceptor about it, he said I need not give myself any trouble for the first half-term; after that, he would talk with me about it. So, as I had a plenty to do without nursing any unnecessary cares, I concluded to work

while it is called to-day, and let to-morrow take care of itself. Thus every thing went on finely for more than two weeks, when the bar-keeper went away, and I was called to more duty in-doors, especially in the bar-room. Before this, I had neither known nor thought much about this part of Major Otis's establishment, my attention having been completely occupied with what was given me to do in other parts of the house.

Liquor-drinking was my abhorrence even then, before any of the extensive and direct movements in behalf of temperance began to be greatly agitated. Mother took a great interest in the early discussion of the question; and in her frequent evening conversations with Henry and me, she planted, in our hearts and consciences, the seeds of strict and entire abstinence from intoxicating drinks. In looking back to our

earliest home-education, three things strike me forcibly:

1st. The clear apprehension we had of moral truth, and of its consequent obligations and duties, from the fact that we saw it free from all the twisting and quibbles with which self-interested, selfish and timid men reason and act upon it.

2d. The importance of making children see the grounds of moral obligation and personal responsibility, while they are children.

3d. The *indelbleness* of early moral impressions. The character of the future man and woman is generally fixed before ten years have passed,—I mean in kind and degree. Not but that the grace of God may convert a very bad man into a very good man; but the regenerated heart will still be subject to the craving appetites, the lingering lusts, the grovelling desires,

the cowardly fears of his weak moral nature and shattered physical system.

Though in and about the bar-room, it was some time before I was called to do any thing repugnant to my principles. It was now late in the autumn. My clothes were none of the warmest, so that a snug seat by the bright bar-room fire, and the use of the bright bar-room lamps to learn my lessons by, (for in the early part of the evening few, if any, people came in,) were certainly important considerations for me. For advantages like these, I could forego the gin and tobacco fumes, which sometimes made me sick and dizzy, and bear with them, disagreeable as they were. The swearing, which I occasionally heard, was worse than all. But Major Otis himself did not allow much of it, especially from any common sort of person; so that, I suppose, I heard fewer

oaths than are commonly uttered in a bar-room.

Mrs. Otis did not forget her promise about the clothes. At the close of the fourth week, she said—

“Well, Hugh, the tailoress is coming to-morrow; so, hold yourself in readiness to be measured. I have been examining those clothes, and they will do grandly for you.”

In two days more I was in full possession of a warm suit, which was doubly acceptable, as I had no great-coat. The suit was more than was bargained for, also. It was the free gift of Mrs. Otis, who was very kind and motherly, though she was not at all like my mother. But I am sure, as she turned me round to see how they fitted, she seemed as pleased as she well could be.

“There, Hugh, you deserve it, I think.

You are more faithful than any boy we've had for many a day."

For this and other favours shown me I felt very thankful, for I had not been accustomed to receive favours.

It was on one Wednesday morning, that the major was going away on some business, and he wanted me to go to the preceptor and get leave of absence from school, which I did. After giving several directions, just as he was stepping into the sleigh, he said—

"And you, Hugh; you stand ready to tend the bar, when Nancy can't go in."

Nancy was a stout girl—his niece—trusty and industrious, in whom they placed great confidence, and who, as they had no children, would become heir to their property. When the major was out, since the bar-keeper's departure, Nancy presided over the decanters.

"It's just what I was afraid might be," I said to myself, as the major's injunctions fell painfully on my ear. "And is it come to this,—that I'm a rum-seller?" In fact, whenever I had time to forebode, this thing had come across me, ever since my duties lay so much more in the bar-room. Then I considered that the major would not dare to trust a boy to be handling such things, and that quieted me. But now my fears were actually realized. My courage sunk below zero. The major had put me to the bar. What could I,—what should I do?

Mrs. Otis presently called me to pick over some barrels of apples. How cheerfully I ran to do it! Any thing to take me from the bar-room. The forenoon passed away, and there was no call for my services—my dreaded services.

It was late in the afternoon,—a chilly, dark, lowering November afternoon,—I

sat by the fire with one of my school-books, when Lovell Laws came in.

"Where are you to-day, Hugh?" asked Lovell. "Truant, hey? Our class does miserably without you."

I told him the reason.

"I wish I could board here," said Lovell; "sitting here and seeing people, as you do; joking with the men, too. I always go to our tavern. It's just by father's. But the preceptor won't let the boys come here. He's awful strict. I don't see what harm it will do."

"If anybody likes the smell of whisky and tobacco-smoke, and the noise of quarrelling and swearing, there's plenty of all these here," I said. "For my part, I hate them all."

"Brandy smells good, I think," said Lovell; "and the sugar at the bottom of a glass of brandy-toddy tastes good; and

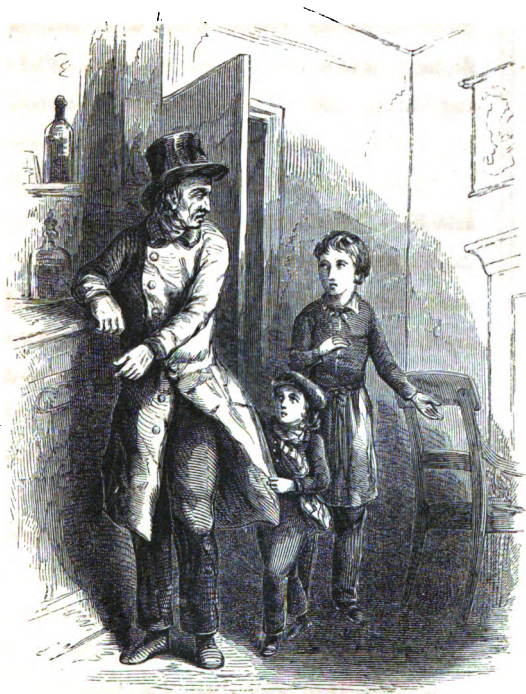
cigars—why, cigars are very pleasant. I mean to smoke just as soon as I can. I do now, sometimes, slyly,” he said, winking his eye and cocking his head.

“I’m for temperance,” I said.

“You! And in a bar, too!” exclaimed Lovell. “That’s a joke!”

A pretty sorry joke, I thought.

At that moment a sleigh stopped at the door. I went and looked out of the window. An old man and a little boy were in the sleigh. The old man got out and tied his horse, and then they both came in. Cold and shivering, the little boy ran to the fire. The old man hobbled towards the bar. I ran out to call Nancy. Nancy was busy and could not come in that moment, but bade me take her place. On returning, the little boy was tugging at the old man’s coat, begging him to come to the fire and warm himself.



"On returning, the little boy was tugging at the old man's
coat." p. 136.

"Don't, grandfather, don't!" begged the little boy.

Lovell had thrown himself on an old bench, and was laughing.

"Get out!" said the old man, snappishly, to the little boy.

"Don't, grandfather!" pleaded the little boy.

"Go away, I tell you!" cried the old man, standing up before the bar, and holding on to the shelf. I saw that he was already quite overcome with liquor.

"Where's the man that tends bar?" asked the old man, looking stupidly round. "Where's the man that tends here, I should like to know—Major Somebody?"

"Oh, grandfather, don't! We shall never get home, and the dark's coming on," again pleaded the little boy, looking very much distressed.

Could I go to the bar and hand more

rum to that poor old man, already more than half drunk,—and that, too, in spite of the pleadings of the little boy?

“Come and sit down here, sir,” I said pleasantly. “Here is a nice warm fire!” handing him a chair.

“Well, I will!” answered the old man. The little boy looked gratefully at me. After he was seated, I again ran out and told Nancy.

Meantime, an old customer came in, who marched up to the bar and asked for a glass of brandy.

“There’s somebody else!” cried Nancy. “Go in, Hugh, and mind your business. I’m busy, you see.”

“Go,” added Mrs. Otis; “Nancy can’t be spared now.”

I hesitated a moment.

“Why don’t you go?” cried Nancy.

“I can’t give grog to that old man,

Nancy ; I really cannot," I answered decidedly.

With an angry look, she left her work, and hastened into the bar. How I felt, as I saw the liquor dealt out to the old man ! The little boy almost cried. "We shall never get home !" he said piteously. I helped them into the sleigh. It was evident, by the way which the old man jerked his bridle, that he was already unfit to guide his horse. The little boy said, "'twas six miles they had to go, and the dark was coming on. I don't know what will become of us !" he said. Neither did I. They had perils before them ; but intoxicating drink had created them.

"It is not your business nor mine to say who shall or who shall not buy at our bar, Hugh," said Nancy, after they were gone. "It's nothing to us. They can judge for themselves."

"But Hugh says he's a temperance man," said Lovell.

"Temperance! So am I temperance!" exclaimed Nancy. "But it is not for me to take care of other people. People must act according to their own conscience."

Yes, that is so; and I felt that I must act according to mine. That night I lay down in the little bunk—a little place in the bar-room—where the bar-keeper slept, and where I now slept, and troubled thoughts began to arise in my mind. What could I,—what should I do? I could not tend a bar. I could not deal out liquor to any poor fellow that might ask for it. On the other hand, could I tell Major Otis of my scruples? Could I run the risk of hurting Mrs. Otis's feelings, ay, and the risk of being turned away, also, just at the beginning of winter, when I found it so hard to secure any place at all?

I felt very, very bad. There was not a friend whom I could consult or ask advice from,—none, at least, but my Almighty Friend and Heavenly Father. In the severe conflict which followed in my soul, there was nothing I could do but spread the case out before my God, beseech him to guide my steps aright and give me strength equal to my day. When I retired to rest, every now and then the image of the piteous little boy flitted before me. I dreamed that he and the old man were dying in the snow, the sleigh broken and the horse running away.

The next day, Major Otis came back. I found he went to engage a bar-keeper, but failing to do so, concluded to wait till somebody offered. They could get along pretty well between himself, Nancy and me. Me! What could I do? I must act in a deliberate manner against my con-

science, or take a stand on the side of conscience. I remembered how my mother, in perplexed and trying cases, used to consult her minister—her dear old minister. Oh, how I wished I had such an adviser! I thought of Mr. Devins, whose preaching I had heard since becoming a member of Lion Academy. But he did not know me, neither did I know him; and I was sure I could not go to a stranger with my troubles and perplexities, although one's minister would seem the surest and best friend in a case like mine. I wanted to speak with Mrs. Otis about the matter. She was so friendly, it seemed to me she would side with me; indeed, I was sure she could not, in her heart, approve of rum-selling.

One evening she and I were sitting together by the dining-room fire. She was darning stockings, and I, with my eyes on

my book and my mind on the bar, whence, at this moment, issued high words, as if a brawl was brewing.

“Do you think, Mrs. Otis,” I asked, (having puzzled my head a long time how to introduce the subject in a natural manner,) “do you think it is just the thing to sell liquor, Mrs. Otis?”

“Why, Hugh?”

“I only just wanted to know what you thought about it, Mrs. Otis.”

“Liquor *is* sold,” answered she, “and it *will be* sold; so I do not know why we should not sell it as well as anybody else. We could not keep tavern, unless we did.”

“And yet getting drunk is a real sin. The Bible reckons drunkards among thieves and such people. It says, that ‘neither thieves, nor revilers, nor *drunkards* shall inherit the kingdom of God,’ ” said I.

“Certainly!” exclaimed Mrs. Otis; “it

is a very bad—a very wicked thing to get drunk—very bad! and it brings a great deal of misery on a family.”

“Oh, yes,” I said eagerly; “the Bible says, ‘For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty;’ and it says again, ‘Who hath wo? who hath sorrow? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine.’ And it says, more, ‘Look not on the wine when it is red, for at the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder.’”

“Yes,” agreed the landlady, “it is just so. I’ve seen Scripture exemplified more than once in just this way.” And she went on to relate one or two instances of a drunkard’s fare and fate. We both then stood upon the same ground in regard to the sin of drunkenness.

“Well, Mrs. Otis, who is to blame for it? That man you just told about, who was found dead in the snow—who was to blame for bringing him there, do you think?”

“Why, himself, to be sure. He had no business to get drunk. He knew better. People must know how to moderate and restrain their appetites. Every tub, you know, must stand on its own bottom.”

“But is it right to put temptation in the way of people, Mrs. Otis? 'Tis not everybody that is strong enough to resist temptation, you know. Ought we not to keep people out of harm's way, if we can?”
I asked earnestly.

“I think it is about as much as we can do to take care of ourselves,” answered the landlady. “We have no right to say what others shall or sha'n't do.”

“Yes, I know we have to take care of

ourselves; and, among other things, we must take care not to injure or destroy our neighbour. The Bible says, 'Wo unto him that gives his neighbour drink, that puts his bottle to him and makes him drunken.' " *

"Why—Hugh—yes—indeed—I would not have people murderers or thieves on any account!" exclaimed Mrs. Otis.

"Nor drunkards? which the Bible reck-
ons just as bad as either."

"No, nor drunkards. I am sure I would not have people drunkards. It's making themselves beasts."

"And you would not, in any way, *help* to make people thieves or murderers?"

"Mercy! Hugh, what a question to ask? Who do you take me for?"

"And you would not help, in any way,

* Hab. ii. 15.

to make people drunkards?" I asked respectfully, but earnestly, for my mind was full of the subject.

"I hope not!" cried the landlady,—*"I hope not! What should I want to make people drunkards for?"*

Alas! do not multitudes want to make people drunkards for *money*? Do they not do it in order to get rich?

There was a long pause, and Mrs. Otis kept at her darning. There was one more question, if I dared ask it.

"May I ask you one question, Mrs. Otis?" I at length said,—my heart palpitating.

"Ask what you have a mind to," she answered shortly. "I can answer ~~it~~ or not, just as I please."

I trembled—I know I did—as I spoke. "But is not tending a bar and selling liquors by the glass, which you know will

intoxicate, and even selling it to people who are already tipsy and hardly know what they want, and to others who we are sure will be so, if they go on drinking,—is not this helping to make people drunkards, as sure as can be?”

Mrs. Otis's face coloured very red, and I was afraid I had gone too far. She had always suffered me to talk with her, and now I had presumed upon her good-nature. I twisted in my chair, and wished I had not said it, or that somebody would just come in and break the uncomfortable silence.

“All you say may be true enough, Hugh,” at last she answered, in a grave tone. “But it is very certain we can't keep tavern here without a bar; and if we leave here on account of any such scruples, somebody else will take it and keep one; so that it does not make much differ-

ence, you see. We must take things as they are. When the temperance people talked to the major, he got really angry with them. There will be a bar here, on this spot—the public want it—as he told them, and why should not he keep it as well as anybody else? The major is a strict temperance man himself, you know. He never drinks any thing.”

With this reasoning, what becomes of one's personal responsibility? what of our accountability to God for the use which we make of ourselves? Can we excuse ourselves by pleading what others would do in our circumstances, or what they would neglect to do?

My mother had not so taught us. Do *thou* no wrong; enter upon no doubtful course of conduct; be loyal to the authority of conscience and God. Make no excuse for a sinful act, when your inclina-

tions conflict with known and acknowledged duty. Seek fairly, honestly, candidly and prayerfully to find out what is the right principle, and then act upon it firmly and with an undivided heart. It matters not what others may think of you, or reason for you; you may be sure that God means you should act for *yourself*, and to him you are to stand or fall.

Several days passed away, and I was so busy I had no time to dwell upon the subject which was so painful to me, except to see almost daily evidence that people were made drunkards at the major's bar. Although liable, at any time, to be called to give the intoxicating cup, some time passed by, and I was not actually called upon; so I concluded, under the homeless circumstances in which I was placed, not to be too squeamish upon the subject. A week or two slipped by, and the major's family

were as friendly to me as I could wish, or as I deserved. Except in one thing, I had not been happier since my mother died. I loved my studies and my teacher, and I felt thankful for such comfortable shelter. What more could a poor orphan ask? one might say.

Thus it went on, until the death of a relative of Mrs. Otis, when all the family were called to church one Sunday morning, leaving me in charge of the bar-room.

"Take good care," said the major, on going out of the door, "and do as you would be done by, Hugh." It was considerable for the major to say to me, and I pondered it for some time, as I took my Bible and sat down by the bar-room fire. It was a cold, blustering day. One or two loungers came in, asked where the major was, warmed themselves, and went out. At last a sleigh drove up, from which two

young men jumped out and came blustering in.

"Here's the major's!" exclaimed one; "always ready with the best glass of brandy anywhere in the country about. His spirits are prime!"

"They say his jokes are, too."

"Yes, yes: they relish each other;" and the speaker, opening his coat and taking off his cap, walked towards the bar. "Eh! nobody here? Where's the major? Who waits here?" Turning around, I recognised the oldest brother of little Joe Price—my old school-fellow—whose dissipated habits had almost brought his mother to the grave. Jem told me, a little while before I left, that Sam Price had reformed. But his present appearance did not look like reforming, and it made my heart ache, as I remembered some of the distressing things Jem had told me

about him,—so young, once so promising—for his mother had scraped together means to send him to college—and, as his later career had proved, so unpromising. “Oh, dear!” I said to myself, eying him, “he shows it in his face. Sam Price used to be so promising a youth. Why will he ruin himself in this way? Why don’t he stop? What use can there be in drinking?”

“Who tends the bar?” asked Sam Price, strutting up and down the room with a very consequential air. “I should like to know where the bar-keeper is? The major don’t leave things in this style.”

“Here is a young man, here,” said his companion, turning towards me. “Where’s the major? Who waits on the bar? We are in a hurry!”

“He’s gone to meeting. He’ll be home soon,” I said, with a heart-sinking.

"Well; but is there nobody here to wait on travellers? We must be attended to."

"I am left in charge," I answered.

"Step quick, then! A glass of brandy and water—pretty stiff glass. One must get warmed up this cold day—a pretty stiff glass!" cried Sam Price.

What a strait was I in! Could I—ought I—with my principles, under any circumstances, become a dram-seller? I never engaged to do it, when I came to live with Major Otis. It was no part of my stipulated service or duty. But could I not oblige Major Otis a little? It was not, after all, my business, but his. What had I to do with the results or consequences? It was nothing I could prevent or amend. Was there not such a thing as being too particular? Ought I to stand in my own light? All these suggestions

shot like lightning through my mind while Sam Price was speaking.

My principles, my conscience forbade. Every thing was in favour of obedience. "Do *thou* no wrong thing," cried conscience. "Dram-drinking is leading Sam Price to ruin; do not you lend a helping hand."

"But what shall I,—what can I do?" I asked myself.

A second more, and the die was cast! I defined my position.

"Mr. Price," I answered calmly to his second and angry demand, "Major Otis asked me to stay here while they all went to meeting. I am not a bar-keeper—'tis not my work. I cannot consistently sell liquor for anybody else, any more than I could for myself. Will you wait until the major comes home? He'll be back soon."

The two young men looked at me as I

spoke. Sam Price, with a sneering surprise upon his face—"And who are you, pray? A youngster who sets himself up to be somebody? The major has got queer stuff in his house."

"Stuff that is likely to hurt him!" cried his companion with an oath.

"Who are you? I've seen you before!" exclaimed Sam; "haven't I?"

"My name is Hugh Fisher. I used to go to school with your brother Joe."

"Yes, yes; well, what are you here for?" I told him.

"Do I understand you to say, that you could give us something to drink, but you won't?" asked Sam's companion, growing angry as he thought longer of my refusal.

"The plain case is, that I cannot give you any thing."

"Why? Is the bar locked up?"

"No, sir. I could get what you wished,

but my conscience forbids," I replied firmly.

"Were you not put here to serve the major's customers?" asked Sam Price's companion in a rough, swaggering manner.

"I did not engage to live with Major Otis for this purpose," was my reply.

"Engaged to or not," said an old toper who had come in during the conversation, and stood blinking his eyes before the fire,—"engaged to or not, I reckon the major expects you to attend on customers; and you'll rue the day that you didn't, or I lose my reckoning!"

"Well!" exclaimed Sam Price, "I shall stop until I see the major, and find out from him whether he puts a temperance agent into his bar-room to lecture his customers."

It was not long before the church services were closed, and I hardly knew whether it was a relief or not to see the

people coming home. What would Major Otis say? What will Mrs. Otis, and what would Nancy say? Should I be turned away? I went out towards the barn. How I longed for a single friend, to speak freely with! I stood, as it seemed, all alone. Nobody to encourage me, and nobody to sympathize with me; nobody to back me up, or stand by me.

But no matter, I had not been false to my conscience. It had spoken to me—I heard and obeyed. The consequences must be left to God, who careth for us. I went down behind an old stage-coach, and there kneeled before God, to ask guidance and strength from him. He had helped me before, and I knew he could help me now. I prayed for an obedient and courageous heart. My heavenly Father comforted me. When I arose from my knees, I felt ready and willing to suffer for conscience'

sake. I felt ready and willing to suffer in God's appointed way. A peaceful feeling stole over me, which took away all my fears.

At dinner-time, nothing was said about it in the kitchen, for it was not known: Major Otis opened the door and gave some orders, and shut it quickly again. When I went to church in the afternoon, how wistfully did I look round and wish some of the good people there were my friends! I looked at the minister, and longed to go and talk with him.

After supper, as I sat reading in the kitchen, a message came that Major Otis wanted to see me in the back sitting-room. My knees almost smote one another as I arose, but I lifted up my heart in silent prayer to God for his direction in this, my hour of need: "O my God, help me, for Christ's sake," I ejaculated, as I went through the long dining-room, and opened

the door of the little sitting-room, to confront the major, who sat with his feet on the stove and his hands raised and crossed at the back of his head. As I walked in, he directed me to a seat. I suppose it was not many seconds, but it seemed a great while before he spoke.

"Well, Hugh," he at length said, "what was the fracas in the bar-room, while I was gone to meeting?"

"No fracas, sir," I answered, and then went on to state the case as it occurred. He listened attentively, with his stern eye fixed on me. But I felt no fear: if he turned me out of doors, I thought God would take me up and provide for me a home. At any rate, I was willing to trust Him. After finishing my recital, there was a pause, which the major broke by asking,

"And do you call that acting for the interest of your employers, Hugh?"

I told him I engaged myself as a chore-boy, and not as a bar-keeper; and that if he had wanted me to come as the latter, I could not have done so, because it was contrary to my principles.

"But could you not have been a little obliging?" asked he. "It was but very little I asked of you, and we've shown ourselves friendly to you, a poor boy, Hugh."

"Yes, sir; yes, sir!" I exclaimed. I looked at my clothes. It was the suit that Mrs. Otis gave me. "Yes, sir, I have got a good home here. I feel thankful for it. I am willing to do, but"—I stopped a moment, and then added, "I can't sell liquors, Major Otis; indeed, I can't. If it's wicked to be a drunkard, it is wicked to help in any way to make a drunkard, and my conscience tells me never to do it. I must mind my conscience, Major Otis, at any risk."

I expected quite a tempest; instead of which, he looked into the fire awhile, and then said,

“You can go to bed now, Hugh; further orders another time.”

As I went away, I could not guess, from his manner, exactly how he felt towards me; but in his last words I thought I saw something ominous and forboding. “Further orders another time!” And what would those orders be? To leave his home?—So I feared. “Well,” I said, half sighing, “if Major Otis turns me away for this, there is nothing for me to be sorry for—but I will wait quietly, doing my duty until he does.” And yet the thought of being turned away—it would come up. The major was an off-hand man. He was a rum-seller. I, a boy,—a poor boy,—had sided against him. Alas! I had nothing to expect.

School Grumblers.

THE school, the academy, the teachers and the lessons, all seemed just right to me, but there were boys who kept perpetually grumbling. "This rule was too strict." "Mr. Hanson has no business to forbid us that." "Mr. Hanson is a knotty old fellow and must be chopped down." "The lessons were too long." "Too much by half was required of the boys; they ought not to stand it." "They must show their teeth."

Lovell Laws was generally the chief of complainers. Every rule and regulation he seemed to have a grudge against; and yet

he was so smooth in his appearance, I do not think the teachers suspected him. Practical jokes at last began to be played; and very foolish and sorry ones, I thought.

One morning, a quantity of brimstone was found in the stove, so that when the fire began to burn, the smell was so suffocating, the teacher was obliged to give the boys their liberty until the stove was cleared. Pins were placed in the teachers' chairs with their points up. The roll disappeared from Mr. Hanson's desk. Almost every day something of this kind occurred, greatly hindering the daily business of the school.

No clue could be discovered to the perpetrators. The teachers appealed to the honour, the manliness, the principles of the boys: every one denied the slightest knowledge of the circumstances. The state of affairs reached the ears of the trustees, and when some things were found

to be done which really endangered the academy buildings, it was proposed to offer a reward for the detection of the offenders. It made much talk in the village, and created much anxiety among the teachers. Such things had never occurred before. The good order and high-toned character of the school seemed to be at stake; and the disorder must be traced to some of the new scholars, who had entered at that term. There were but five or six of us, and, of course, we became objects of close scrutiny by those in authority.

One morning, the academy bell did not ring. "Where's the bell?" asked one and another, as, at the usual hour, with books in hand we began to assemble. But few boys had arrived when we got there. "What's the matter with the bell?" was the first question. The tongue of the bell

had disappeared, and the rope had been cut off where it was fastened to the wheel. Nobody could tell how the building had been entered, or divine who had done the mischief. Mr. Hanson had been early informed of it by the boy who swept the rooms and built the fires, and had hastened to inspect the premises. Lovel Laws had a good deal to say about it, wondering, and guessing, and listening to every thing which the others had to say.

It was some time before the school came to order, and when fairly opened, there was a restless inattention among the boys not very favourable to study. Mr. Hanson looked stern. Mr. Perry, the assistant teacher, seemed grieved and anxious. At recess, there was a rumour rife that Mr. Hanson had found a knife in the belfry, and the knife would give some clue to the perpetrators. The village-boys declared,

if they could be found out, they would be sent away in disgrace, for one of the trustees said so. A knife had been found! Everybody was likely to examine his pockets and search his desk to see if his was safe! Many of the boys began to take out their knives and show them. I thrust my hand into my pocket. My knife was not there, but I knew I had left it in my desk. "Where's your's, Fisher?" exclaimed one or two, as several of us clustered round the pump, exhibiting knives. "In the school, I suppose. It is not in my pocket," I answered, and ran in to get it. It was not in, or on, or under my desk. I examined it over and over again, in hot haste. Then I thought I must have left it at home somewhere,—in my other jacket, perhaps,—for I remembered having changed it.

Recess was over. On going home, one

of the boys joined me, and asked if I had found my knife. "No," I answered, "it is in my other jacket, I guess. I have not had it this morning."

The first thing I did was to find my jacket, but there was no knife in it. I asked the servants if they had seen my knife anywhere. Nobody had seen it! It was curious that I should miss it just at this time, although I felt very sure I had mislaid it somewhere about the house.

In the afternoon, there was another rumour, that some of the trustees had met that day. I began to feel a little uneasy about my knife: at any rate, I thought, just at that time, I should rather have my knife to show than not—especially as I had not the means of buying another. How or where I could have lost it, I could not conjecture. I examined all my pockets—there was not a hole in one of them,

and it seemed to me as if I had had it that morning. That day and the next passed, and the absence of the bell seemed perpetually to remind us that something was amiss, while the stern and sober look of Mr. Hanson's face was enough to awaken apprehension on the part of the offenders, whoever they were. Saturday morning there was something in his opening remarks to the boys which plainly showed that evidence which could throw light upon past disorders was before him, and that measures would be soon taken to cure the school of existing evils. His tone was very severe. The boys looked at him and looked around at each other. It was profoundly still as he spoke.

How many times did I thrust my hands into both pockets, vainly wishing and hoping to grasp my knife!

"Where in the world can it be just

now?" again and again I said to myself.

The boys were very sober that Saturday morning. We were all dismissed as usual. I was very busy all the afternoon, but as I occasionally met the scholars in the street, we stopped a moment to exchange a few words upon pending matters and mysteries.

"Who could it be? Whose knife was it? For one of the village boys declared it was a knife Mr. Hanson found." So we wondered. If for a moment a shadow of suspicion passed through my mind that Mr. Hanson had my missing knife, I instantly banished it with, "It cannot be it!" and I would not give myself any unnecessary concern. The family at the hotel often asked me about the affair, which I freely talked over; indeed, the villagers prided themselves upon their

academy, whose recent ill-usage they resented and were ashamed of.

No sooner had I opened the kitchen-door, on my return from an errand to a distant part of the village, just after supper, than some one bawled out, "You are sent for to go up to the preceptor's, Hugh, at seven o'clock—there's for you! What does that mean, I should like to know—don't it look threatening?"

I said I did not know what it meant, but I could go and find out quick enough.

I sat down and ate my supper without speaking.

"Pity you had not your knife!" said some one.

"A thousand pities!" added the cook.

"I mean, Hugh, you shall have one," cried the hostler, "here, Hugh, you shall have mine. Put it in your pocket and show it to the preceptor, if any thing

comes of this knife story. Here, Hugh, take it and welcome," and with good-natured warmth, he slipped the knife down into my pocket.

"Oh, I can't now," I quickly answered, though with a feeling sense of his kindness. "My own knife is really gone. I can't account for it, but I must deal honestly."

"Take it!" cried the hostler, "take it! It is your's! We can all prove it's your's!"

"When I come back," answered I.

"But suppose, by some unaccountable way or other, the preceptor has got your knife. Now, you did not cut the bell-rope, I suppose. What are you going to do? You are innocent, and having the knife will prove your innocence."

The hostler was very earnest.

"Take it," cried another, "I would!"

"Not for the world!" I answered.

"The supposed evidence would be false.

I would not do any thing I was ashamed of. This would be downright lying," said I, buttoning up my jacket to go out. "As for the knife, I shall be very thankful for it after I get back, because, if mine never comes to light, I cannot afford to buy another."

I ran down to the preceptor's as fast as I could, and it was not long before I was seated in his study. How my heart did beat! After addressing some remarks to me about honour and confession, and the rules of the institution, he put his hand in his pocket, and, drawing forth a knife, asked me if that was mine.

"Yes, sir," I answered, instantly recognising it.

"This was found on the belfry-stairs," continued he, "and it is supposed its owner must know something of the injury done to the bell."

“It is my knife, sir ; but I do not know how it came there.” And as I was speaking, two of the trustees came in and took their seats opposite to me. They eyed me very narrowly.

“It is useless for you to deny it,” said one,—“quite useless. There is the proof. You had better tell out, at once, who were engaged with you. It will save time, and perhaps will be better for you.” His cold, hard tone fell repulsively upon my ear.

“Oh, my mother !” I murmured in my heart.

“Speak out, young man,” added the other trustee,—“the quicker the better. This state of things in the academy must be righted immediately.”

I thought I should sink to the floor. I felt awed and frightened. Again I denied all knowledge of the transaction.

The painful interview lasted for some

time, until I was angrily dismissed by one of the trustees, with the injunction not to appear at school until I heard from them again. "The most dogged boy I ever met with!" he cried, as I went out the door. "The boy deserves"—the closing of the door prevented my hearing the remainder of the sentence.

The cold night-air swept refreshingly on my hot, fevered face, as I plunged along the snow, hardly knowing whither I went. Blamed, disgraced, blasted in my hopes and prospects of getting on in my studies,—for if I was to be turned away, and in disgrace, too, from the Lion Academy, I knew not where else to go, or who would admit me to another institution—a painful and maddened sense of wrong and injustice took possession of me. "What does it mean?" I cried aloud. "A poor, friendless orphan—no home, no friend to

flee to in this wide world! What will the Otises say? What will become of me?" I ran along the street, as if to run from myself and the unhappy entanglement in which I was caught. It was a dark, cold Saturday night in December—cheerless, desolate. A bright light issued from many a window along the street, which seemed to mock me in my hour of lonely agony.

"Oh, mother! mother!" I cried aloud.

I dreaded going into the house. Turning into the shed, I felt my way to a grindstone, and sat down upon its frame to compose my mind and look soberly at my position. Then I betook myself to my best and only refuge: I leaned over the grindstone, and poured forth my sorrows to the hearer and answerer of prayer. Like good David of old, I made God my refuge. Many a time, in secret, had I dedicated myself to Him, and now

I cast myself upon His gracious love, and begged Him to give me strength to act according to His will in this unhappy affair. I entreated His help, and besought Him to be my defence and to plead my innocence. What a comfort was prayer to me! I became more composed, and at last summoned resolution to enter the kitchen and meet the servants, whom I supposed were waiting to learn the issue of my visit.

"Well!" cried the hostler; "well, Hugh, you've got back? Come to the fire. You're ready to take the knife now, a'n't you?"

"What did the preceptor want?" inquired another.

"Are they found out?" eagerly asked a third.

I sat down and told my story.

"I say, they might have known better!"

cried the hostler. "Just as if a boy like you, with your hands full from morning till night, would have set about devising all this mischief. It is some of those idle chaps, who have nothing to do, and mortally hate to study."

"Why, Hugh, it wasn't you, was it?"—asked the cook, amazed that the preceptor and two trustees were against me.

"It certainly wasn't me," I replied.

"I would not have owned to the knife; for there is no sense in making it a proof against you, when you know you are innocent," said the chambermaid.

"Why, I would not lie myself out of difficulty on any account!" I said. "Then I should have been guilty, but now I feel innocent."

Their counsels and sympathy, though kindly meant, gave me little comfort, and I took up a lamp to go to bed.

"Will you tell Mrs. Otis?" asked the cook.

"Not to-night," I answered. "It makes me heart-sick to think of it."

"And everybody knowing it so!" cried the chambermaid.

"Why, what will you do, Hugh?" asked the hostler for the fifth or sixth time.

"Trust all my ways to God, Ned!" I replied, with a profound and feeling sense that this was the only right way.

Sunday was a sorrowful day to me. It was true that conscious innocence supported my fainting spirits, yet there I was, suspected and arraigned without being able to prove my innocence; and I saw nothing before me but a speedy ending of all my long-cherished plans about getting an education, without any plan or prospect of doing any thing else; and what

was worse, with no earthly friend to go to in my hour of need.

“It is all the will of God!” I kept saying to myself. And the words of a hymn, often repeated by my mother, rose to my lips:

“Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust him for his grace;
Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face.

“His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower.”

Monday I did not go to school, neither did I hear any thing further from the trustees. After four days, Major Otis, who had been absent for some time, came home. It was not long before he came out to the wood-house, where I was at work faint-hearted enough, and immediately broached the subject.

“And you don’t know how your knife came there?” said the major.

“No, sir; it was my knife, but I never had any hand in any of that mischief. I came here to study, and that is what I have tried to do.”

Nothing more was said, and the major walked hastily off.

The next morning, as I was eating my breakfast, he opened the dining-room door and said, “Hugh, you may take your books and go to school, this morning.”

“What did you say, sir?” I exclaimed, hardly crediting my ears, while my fork dropped from my hand on the floor.

“I say,” repeated the major, “you can go to the academy again,—the trustees say so.”

How I wanted to inquire more! But he shut the door, and I was left to surprise, gratitude and joy. What did it mean?

The hostler, chambermaid and cook soon knew it, and seemed very glad. We all congregated around the kitchen fire, wondering at the new aspect of affairs.

"The real offender is found out, I guess!" exclaimed Ned.

"And he richly deserves a whipping!" cried the chambermaid. "Jem Cook said that the preceptor stated the case to the boys, telling them how your knife had been found there, and how you solemnly declared you had no hand in the mischief; and saying if the real offender had a spark of manliness, of honour, or of generosity, he would appear, and not allow a poor boy, and an innocent one too, to be punished. He is a mean, good-for-nothing fellow, I'm thinking!"

"That's what he is!" echoed the cook. "But perhaps he's come out now and

confessed, for Hugh is clear. He is sent for, to go to the academy again."

"And glad am I of it!" cried Ned.

"I wish we could know more about it," said the chambermaid. "Somebody must have confessed."

"Of course," added the cook; "for how else could Hugh be cleared? Well, Hugh, tell us all about it as soon as you find out. I am glad and thankful you are out of the scrape. I should like to know who the rogues are."

I did not happen to reach the school-room until after the boys had assembled; and the door was locked, as it usually was during morning devotions, in order to prevent any interruptions to the exercises. Mr. Hanson was talking to the boys. I could hear enough to know that it was in relation to present difficulties; but what point he was upon, I could not find out.

It seemed almost an hour that I stood out in the hall waiting, but the time was improved by study ; when, at last, the door was unlocked, and I walked in. All eyes were so turned towards me, that I felt abashed and frightened.

After school, the preceptor asked me to accompany him to his room. His kind and considerate manner both puzzled and pleased me.

"Fisher," said he, as I walked by his side, "Major Otis has been to my house to speak a word for you, and he has been to see the trustees also."

I bowed my head.

"And I am glad to hear such a good account of you," he continued.

I looked up surprised.

"The major tells me how strictly you keep the Sabbath. He tells me you have strong and decided temperance principles ;

and what is better than all, that you are not afraid of acting up to them."

There came a suffocating feeling in my throat. I believe it was thankfulness to God springing up from my heart.

"He says you are faithful and studious," continued Mr. Hanson; "that doing what seems to you right is your main desire, and nothing tempts you to swerve from the line of duty—in a word, it seems to us highly improbable that a boy, such as Major Otis represents you to be, can have had any hand in this foolish, insubordinate, and mischievous conduct. And although there is the knife, which you own to be your's, and though you cannot account for its being up in the belfry of the academy, and seeming to tell against you, yet weighed in the balance with the steadiness of your conduct, the excellence of your principles, and the plans you are

working to accomplish, it is not enough. We are not willing to believe you guilty, and so we suffer you to resume your studies, and wait patiently for further light on the matter. In a word, Fisher, you are exonerated, and that solely in consequence of the character which you have earned at Major Otis's. Major Otis could not have shown a stronger interest in you, Fisher, if he had been your father ; and in return, I hope your temperance action may be the means of doing him some good. And," said the preceptor, laying his hand upon my shoulder, "you here see the value of keeping unflinchingly to right principles. Some other time, I will talk to you about your plans. You shall have an education, Fisher."

In some way or other, I uttered out a "Thank ye, sir;" nor, with my heart full of emotion, was I sorry to have him break

off the encouraging words which he spoke, and let me go by myself.

It seemed to me, that I was now repaid for all the lonely struggles I had gone through, during the last four years, in the maintenance of the principles in which my mother had educated me. They were the most encouraging, grateful words ever spoken in my ear, and by the good preceptor of Lion Academy, too! They were, perhaps, the first of the kind which I had ever heard. How refreshing, how soothing were they to my sorrowful spirit!

I had not gone far down the street when one of the scholars joined me, to whom I had promised to lend some book: I have forgotten now what it was. He had always shown himself very friendly, and now he grasped my arm, exclaiming, "Good, Hugh! Good! All of us that knew you, knew you had nothing to do with the

matter. We never believed it for a moment. Henry Reed told Mr. Perry that you couldn't have done it,—knife or no knife—you were not the one to be going about wasting your time and doing such mischief! It wasn't in the nature of things." He was very earnest. It was Jasper Twombly.

On reaching home, as we went into the yard, Ned, the hostler, caught a glimpse of us, and came running out of the stable. "All is square, then, is it?" he eagerly asked. "Hugh is just where he ought to be."

"Precisely," answered my companion. "Every one of us that knew Hugh Fisher, knew he had no hand in the bell matter."

"Just so I said," responded Ned; "it is not your industrious, studying fellows that are up to such things."

The cook threw up the window, and

screamed to know "if he was found out, the real offender, the sneaking, meddling little fool!" while I went in pursuit of the book, leaving Jasper Twombly to satisfy her curiosity.

"Well, what made them at last conclude it was not Hugh?" the chambermaid was asking as I came back,—her head and shoulders stretched out of the window, and her face glowing with interest.

"Oh, the preceptor told the boys, this morning, that Major Otis came up to his house, and gave such a good account of Hugh, as clearly to do away the evidence about the knife; and then he talked to us a long while about the worth of a good character."

"Major Otis did!" exclaimed Ned.
"Well, I thought sure he would turn Hugh out of the house, one day, when he

would not tend the bar; but I believe in my heart the major's thought more of him ever since."

"So much for not being afraid to do right," said the chambermaid, drawing in her head. "Honesty is the best policy, after all."

I longed to get away alone; and the first moment I could do so, I fell upon my knees before God, and thanked him for the friends he had raised up for me, and for the merciful deliverance he had vouchsafed me. How I blessed him for the strength he had given me to do right, ever since my mother's death; that he had not suffered me to wander from, or give up, or forget the religious principles and habits in which I had been early nurtured; that I had been able to hold steadfastly to them, whether my companions laughed at me, or abused me, or kept aloof! If I

had been ashamed of them, or had eased away from them, ever so little, on my first departure from home and dwelling among strangers, I should never have regained them while living with Major Otis. The influences there were all worldly and depressing. They were calculated to bring people down to a low standard, rather than raise them up to a higher one. At Uncle Hugh's, God helped me to live in obedience to his commands, and not forsake the instruction of my mother. Every instance of doing right gives us strength for days to come, as anybody will find out who tries. It was easier to obey him at Major Otis's. Besides, He made me more willing to suffer for conscience' sake, casting all my burden upon Him. Many and many a time I could not see how things would turn out, and I could not discern what even the next day would

bring forth, but I always kept praying, "Lead me not into temptation, deliver me from evil, make the path of thy commandments plain before me, and give me strength to walk therein." I knew I was weak and sinful, needing God, my Father, to direct my steps,—God, my Saviour, to wash my sins away,—and God, the Holy Spirit, to refresh and strengthen my often fainting spirit.

Now thankful, rejoicing, I called upon my soul and all that is within me to bless his holy name.

I would say to every boy who may read this story, in the language of the Bible, "My son, FORGET NOT MY LAW ; but let thine heart keep my commandments ; for length of days and long life and peace shall they add to thee."

"Let not mercy and truth forsake thee : bind them about thy neck : write them

upon the table of thine heart: so shalt thou find favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man."

"My son, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother; bind them continually upon thine heart, and tie them about thy neck.

"When thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee, and when thou awakest, it shall talk with thee: for the commandment is a lamp, and the law is light, and reproofs of instruction are the way of life."

As some of my readers may feel curious to know what happened afterwards, and whether the real offenders were ever found out, I will add, that no disorders of this kind ever occurred again during my connection with the academy, which was two years or more. From some cause or other, they suddenly stopped; nobody could say

certainly who the actors were, although Lovell Laws and Peter Emery were, from various little circumstances, strongly suspected. They both left at the close of the term, when some of their old companions broadly hinted what part they played in the transactions. It is very certain, that none of the boys thought any more highly of them for their folly and mischief. Tricks of this kind, (not unfrequently practised by school-boys,) which damage property and derange the general exercises of a school, develop low and vulgar tastes, and show that the perpetrators are devoid of high and manly principles. It is a poor and pitiful kind of fun. And fun that can take pleasure in grieving teachers, who are doing all they can to benefit their pupils, and inflicting injuries on their companions, will surely harden the heart, blunt the conscience, and lead to an utter disregard of

the laws both of God and man. Let boys be careful how they indulge in it.

Early in the spring, after the snow began to melt, the tongue of the bell was found hidden behind a stone-wall in the outskirts of the village. It had called us many and many a time to order, but it could not tell us who degraded it from its station of usefulness and post of honour in the academy-belfry, to a neglected and tongue-tied piece of lumber by the side of a stone-wall.

I stayed two years in Major Otis's family, and never was a truer or firmer friend than he was to me. Long before he left the Washington Tavern, he gave up the bar, and turned the place into a strict temperance house. A large pot of coffee was always on the kitchen stove, ready for travellers on a frosty day, and many a one seemed very well contented with the change.

Others grumbled, abused the major for his folly, warned him of the loss of custom, and threatened to injure his house. The major had settled the thing in his own mind and counted the cost, although it was a great struggle for him to reach it, and he took what people said, as quietly as could be expected. Sometimes he was ruffled, when some of his old friends came and expected the usual indulgence.

“Ah, Hugh, it has cost me ten times more of a struggle to give up selling liquor, though I’ve got a plenty to live on, than it did you to refuse to go to the bar, even when you were liable to lose your home for it,” said he to me one day; “and, Hugh, I doubt if I ever had given it up, but for you.”

This was said when I went to pay him a visit, after I entered college.

I am sure I had cause to bless God for making me the humble instrument of doing good.

A Visit to Henry and Agnes.

MORE than three years had gone by since I had seen my dear brother and sister. We longed to meet, and as soon as Major Otis could spare me, during the winter vacation of Lion Academy, I determined to set off to pay them a long-promised visit. As stage-coach riding cost money, which it was my duty to save as much as possible, I started off on foot, one clear frosty morning, depending upon what chance-rides I might be so fortunate as to secure on my way, the distance being somewhat over fifty miles.

It was about noon on the second day

that I retraced the same road over which Uncle Hugh's wagon bore me more than three years before. If anybody had told me three years would pass before seeing it again, my heart would have sunk at the thought. Even in looking back, it seemed a very long time, as each well-remembered object burst upon my view. My legs became more elastic, and long were the strides I took, impatient to reach my journey's end.

At last, I turned down Thomaston street, where we used to live, and where Henry and Agnes still were, with their kind friends. How my heart fluttered! Mrs. Gray's house came first: I soon spied its neat white front. They did not know exactly when I was coming, so that nobody was on the look-out, although I gazed intently at every window, hoping to get a glance at some well-remembered face. I

opened the gate, and went up the little paved walk which I had not ascended since Henry and I took Agnes to her new home with Mrs. Gray, the night before I went away.

"Shall I knock, or go in?" I asked myself. Then I concluded to go to the side-door, and walk directly in. Turning around, I saw a little girl running along the side-walk, close up by the fence. She also opened the gate, and followed after me. It was a dear little girl, with a bright rosy face, but a great deal bigger than Agnes, I thought.

We again looked at each other—I at the door, and she skipping up the steps. "It is my brother Hugh!" she exclaimed.

"It is my sister Agnes!" cried I.

Then she ran in, exclaiming, "Aunty, aunty! It is Hugh—Hugh has come!"

Mrs. Gray enjoyed it as much as we did.

She bade me a hearty welcome. Agnes threw off her hood and came to me, while we sat looking and laughing in each other's faces. I seemed to have found something which had been lost to me. The gush of affection was quite new and almost overpowering, so long had I lived away from my kindred. I had found friendly hearts, indeed, but the love was not like that of family love. For a moment I forgot my brother, in the happiness of a new-found sister.

Oh, Henry!" I exclaimed, starting up,—“where is Henry? I must go and find Henry. I will run down to Mr. French's. Does he look as well as Agnes?”—for her bright, healthy, animated face seemed to fix my delighted attention.

“Poor little fellow!” answered Mrs. Gray, her countenance changing, “he has been pretty sick of the scarlet-fever.

He's got over it, but it has left him poorly."

Agnes offered to accompany me to Mr. French's, and we immediately set off, without accepting even good Mrs. Gray's urgent invitation to stop and take a luncheon.

We were soon at Mr. French's. "Henry is sick in that bed-room," said Agnes,—her joyful tone sinking into a mournful cadence, and pointing her finger towards the house. "I suppose he is in the kitchen, now, with Aunt French—he loves to stay with her."

"So they are all aunties, Agnes?"

"Yes; and good ones too, Hugh. Henry told me how mother prayed to God to take care of us, before she died; and Henry says he is sure God has put us into kind hands—all of us—you have been, haven't you, Hugh, too?"

She looked inquiringly up into my face,

but she did not see the tears that for a moment blurred my eyes. I thanked God that Agnes and Henry had probably never had the lonely hours, or experienced the silent and severe struggles that I had. Each had their appropriate discipline.

"I'll go in first," said Agnes, when we reached the door. "We've been expecting you, but we will not surprise Henry, lest it should excite him; and Mrs. Gray says he is very weak." So on tiptoe she stepped across a little entry, and opening the kitchen-door, peeped in. I suppose there was unwonted light in her eye, for I heard a feeble voice exclaim—"Agnes, he's come! Hugh is here!" In a moment more, and the brothers met.

After recovering myself from the first gush of glad feeling, I noticed that Henry was extremely agitated; his lips quivered, his hands trembled, his cheek glowed and

his eye had almost an unnatural brightness. He was sitting in a comfortable stuffed rocking-chair, near which stood a table filled with many objects to interest his mind and divert his attention.

"Here is a little drink," said Mrs. French, who stood by with a pleased yet anxious countenance, at the same time offering Henry a tumbler; "take a little, it will make you feel better; it is the excitement; you will feel better, Henry, soon." He drank, while Agnes smoothed his collar, and I gazed upon his face and figure with a love and anxiety which I had never felt before. Henry was changed—oh, how much changed!

Mrs. French then said to me, "The scarlet-fever went hard with Henry, but he is a great deal better than he was. He rides out every pleasant day, and your coming will be the best medicine in the world."

"That it will!" exclaimed Henry. "Hugh has been in my mind a great deal since I have been sick." Then looking at me from head to foot,—“He's a great deal stronger than I am.”

Then we told him how Agnes and I met, and in a little while he became more composed and looked more like himself. What would I not have given to see the ruddy hue of health upon his pale and thin cheek! “But it will be there in time,” I said to myself.

By-and-by, Mr. French came home, and the French boys. They told us we must stay to dinner; so Tommy French ran over to tell Mrs. Gray not to expect us back, for we were to dine with Henry.

If any of the boys who read this have ever been from their family friends for any length of time, they will know that we had a great deal to say. There were Henry,

Agnes, Mrs. Gray, the Frenches, and all the neighbours of the street, who seemed also very glad to see me, and learn what had befallen me since I left, and what prospects beamed upon me for the future.

How surprised and glad I was to find so many dear friends! For everybody seemed a friend that had known and honoured my mother, and they loved to speak of her to me.

I remained at the Gray's and French's nine days. Agnes and I stayed with Henry, and one very clear, pleasant day, he was brought over to Mrs. Gray's; so that our friends planned for us to be together as much as possible. Henry grew better while I was there, so that fears for him did not continue to mar our happiness.

The last day came, as come it must: for there is no way to stop the ceaseless flow of time. I thought I could bear al-

most any thing, I had been thrown about in the world so roughly; but the thought of parting was very painful to me. If Henry had been well, I do not think it would have been so bad; but he looked, at times, very ill, though everybody pronounced him better. The doctor said that time and spring-weather would work wonders for him, and we need not alarm ourselves. Indeed, he would not wonder if next summer should find him as robust as I was, when he would come up to Major Otis's and compare strength with me.

On the last night preceding the present separation, as on the last night before the former, Henry and I slept together. Agnes stayed at home, but she was coming over to breakfast. We were at the French's. It was a snug little bed-room which Henry occupied, close to, and warmed by the kitchen, where Mrs. French, during the

day, could keep him company, and where, when he was better, he used to sit, hour after hour, talking with her and watching her household occupations. Henry and I retired early on the last night. We thought we could talk better in bed. The kitchen was soon deserted, except by puss, who lay purring in the stuffed chair which Henry had vacated. A little fire glimmered in the stove: we could see its flickering on the wall, while the bright stars looked in at the window.

"When I come again,"—I began to say, in the course of our talk in relation to some plan or another.

"You will not find me here then, Hugh!" interrupted my brother.

I stopped, held my breath, and was afraid to ask why.

"And I want to speak about it for one thing," continued he with a steady voice.

“Hugh, Mrs. French has been a mother to me, and Mr. French has been a father to me. I can never repay them; but you may be able to do it, Hugh, some day or other. They have been at considerable expense for me. I want to ask you, if you are ever able, when you grow up to be a man and have begun business for yourself, —I want to ask you to pay them.”

I listened with breathless attention; and not seeming to understand the drift of his words, I tried to say cheerfully, “Oh, may-be you’ll be able to do it before I am. You always had such a knack of getting along. May-be you will have to help me.”

It was some moments before any reply was made. The silence pained me, and I became restless.

“I suppose you’ll grant me my last request, Hugh?” at length Henry said, in a mournful tone.

“Yes, yes! Any thing you’ll ask, Henry! I’ll do any thing for you. But you must cheer up, Henry. You are going to get well,—the doctor and everybody else says you are.”

“No, Hugh, I know I shall not! I feel, all the time, a dreadful sinking that the doctor cannot cure, and that other people don’t know about. I am going to die. But I do not feel afraid to die, Hugh!”

Here I burst into tears, and Henry stopped. Then he spoke again,—but so calmly, so sweetly, so tenderly, so hopefully, that it seemed as if an angel was near us. My own agitation gradually subsided, though I could not utter a word. Never shall I forget that night. At last I said, “Oh, Henry, you are a Christian—a real Christian—I know you are! It does me good to hear you talk so. It is as

mother used to talk. I have not heard any thing like it ever since I have been gone. Henry, you really love God, don't you? And Jesus Christ has given you a new heart, I trust?"

"Jesus Christ has been my best friend—the nearest of all to me. He is, as mother used to say, very precious." Just as he had ceased speaking, the kitchen-door opened, and some one, on tiptoe, came towards the bed-room. It was Mrs. French.

"My dear child," said she, "I am afraid to have you talk so much. It will exhaust you, Henry. A quiet night is every thing for you."

"I suppose I ought to stop, for your sake," said Henry, after Mrs. French had left. "I forgot about your journey. But I want you to be a whole-hearted Christian, Hugh. Father was one. Mother was one. God has separated us here, but

if we love and serve him, he will let us all meet together again, in heaven."

At eight o'clock, I was on my way back to Major Otis's.

Henry lingered until the early spring, when, with the setting sun of one soft April day, he fell asleep in Jesus.

His death was a great shock to me. Mrs. Otis tried to comfort me. Comfort there indeed was in his death, for it was all well with him. He had gone home to his Saviour, but my heart panted after him. "Henry, dear Henry! shall I never see you again here?" I often asked, in the hour of grief. Then I tried to think how God does all things well; and without father, mother, or brother, I must try to love my heavenly Father and my dear Saviour more and better.

College Years.

So far had I progressed in the fulfilment of long-cherished hopes, that I had reached college, where new scenes awaited me. My preparatory course had been finished at the Lion Academy, remaining under the friendly roof of Major Otis. After leaving the academy, I kept school a year, in order to furnish me with funds wherewith to provide myself a suitable wardrobe and books, and to help carry me on during the first college-year. It must be remembered that my chief, and, indeed, sole reliance, was to be on my own exertions, which had to be severely tasked to keep up even with my necessary wants

—there was certainly no room for imaginary ones.

Behold me at college! I boarded in commons, or at a common table with the other students. Chance, as it were, had thrown in my way a young man about my own age, whose pleasing manners favourably impressed me. He, like myself, was a stranger to everybody. After a little talk about our mutual plans and wishes, we concluded to take a room together, and, after the proper preliminaries, we took possession of one of the small rooms assigned to the students. His name was William Burr. For a time, we both prosecuted our studies with equal interest and ardour, until toward the middle of the second term, when his ardour began to cool, and his books were often abandoned for the company of a certain class of idle collegians, who, I suppose, are to be found

within the precincts of every college—preferring to do almost any thing but to study—and from whose disorderly ranks issue those disturbances and outbreaks which cause grief and anxiety to the officers, sadly disturbing the harmony of college duties, and often bringing discredit and even guilt upon themselves, as well as sorrow and suffering on their friends.

Many of these young men, I am sorry to say, were from rich and influential families, which gave them a certain standing among others of lesser note: their purses and their names possessing a rank which their conduct certainly belied.

I began to speak to Burr—first to warn, and at last to remonstrate with him—about his increasing neglect of his studies. He allowed the truth of all I had to say. Indeed, when we first became acquainted,

no one seemed to have more just views than he had, as to the manner in which a college-life should be spent. He knew the right, and yet it became evident in his case, as well as in multitudes of others, he still the wrong pursued. He never attempted to excuse or brace himself by arguments, but usually warded off the point of my remarks in a tone of pleasantry, or with some joke or jest that often provoked a smile in spite of the severer decisions of duty and reason. For a long time, I could not find out how he employed himself, in his long absences from our room.

"Where now, Burr?" I used frequently to ask, on his getting up to go out.

"To Tom Tracy's," was the most frequent reply. Tom Tracy's opinions, sayings and doings were often quoted and repeated, until it seemed that Tom Tracy

was his chief authority. Tom Tracy was at the fag-end of the junior class.

Tom Tracy was a handsome youth of eighteen or thereabouts, with a dark, restless, searching eye, and a head and forehead which bespoke fine faculties. He was the son of General Tracy, a well-known and highly-honoured citizen of the State of ———. I remember I often looked at him, and wondered, if he had a mother or brothers and sisters watching his career with loving and anxious eyes, how they felt about him, and how he treated their love and sympathy! It had always seemed to me, if any thing short of the power of the Holy Spirit could restrain the irregularities and temper the passions of a young man, it would be the memory of home—home! The memory of the home of my childhood used to kindle my heart. Oh, had I then a home!

A home to think of, to return to, to have cheering letters from! I almost envied boys who had homes. Ah! they knew not how to appreciate them as I did, for they had not been homeless.

There were several of the pious students, who for some time had been in the habit of holding a little prayer-meeting at the room of one Griffith, who was boarding in the village. I had the privilege of being among that number, although as yet belonging to no church, by the outward covenant; but my views I never concealed. I hoped I loved the Lord Jesus, and I was not ashamed of owning before any one the allegiance which it was the desire of my life to pay to him. This little prayer-meeting in Griffith's room was a comfort and strengthener to me. It brought me into intimate intercourse with some young men whose daily lives adorned their Chris-

tian profession ; and, indeed, it was the first time I had ever found companions of like sentiments and principles.

One evening, Burr and I were both getting ready to go out at the same time.

“Where are you bound?” asked Burr.

“To a prayer-meeting,” was my reply.

“And I to the card-table ; one is the broad road, and the other is the narrow way,” said Burr, half serious and half in jest.

“Do you consider where each leads ?” I asked seriously.

“I suppose I do—my mother has told me often enough,” he answered with a harshness of manner, which I had not before noticed.

“And are not your mother’s instructions worth minding ?” I said.

“By-and-by,” he answered, after a short pause, as he stooped down to tie his shoe.

“I would not for the world have her know what I do here; but I am in with Tom Tracy, and cannot very well get out. By-and-by I mean to mend my ways. Tom Tracy will not always be here. He is two years before us, you know; but he is such a capital fellow.”

I had so often spoken to Burr before without availing any thing, that I said no more, and we both went on our own chosen ways—he to the card-table, I to the prayer-meeting. As the season advanced, there was evidently a quickening of religious emotions among some of the professors and the pious students. An old Saturday prayer-meeting, in which professors, students and the village Christians mingled together, and which for some time past had only a name to live, became more fully attended, and pious desires were evidently beginning to be awakened in many

a heart. The language of confession and contrition fell from the lips of many a one old in the service of the Saviour, and the state of impenitent sinners around them began to burden their souls and arouse their Christian love. The Spirit of God came down upon his people; and they seemed of one heart and one mind. It was precious to my own soul, for a like season I had never passed through. The professors exhorted the pious students to be true and faithful to their companions, and the work of the Lord was entered upon with cheerful alacrity. Prayer-meetings were also held at different rooms. A deep and holy solemnity rested upon the faces of God's people. The Holy Ghost was present in his renewing and sanctifying power. Many a young man was arrested in his thoughtless career or his ambitious hopes, and induced to pause and think of

eternal realities, of heaven and hell, and of the judgment to come.

“What shall I do to be saved?” burst from many a burdened heart. How was the tone of almost every thing about the college enclosures changed! There was a deep stillness throughout the halls. The noise of thoughtless mirth was hushed. There were anxious inquiries and serious faces, as if business of unspeakable importance was going on. Ah, yes! business of unspeakable importance it certainly was. God was calling the young men of that college to come to him!

“Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die?” said the voice.

“Repent and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out.”

“Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation.”

At that period, business was being trans-

acted for eternity; life and death hung, it may be, on the decisions of a moment.

How my heart yearned for my roommate, William Burr! He was the son of pious parents—he had had at times deep religious convictions. He knew his duty. I soon found he contrived to be with me as little as possible. He evaded the remotest allusion to the subject of religion, and although he never seemed angry when I urged it upon his attention, he listened with a calm and cold indifference that I felt to the quick. A small meeting of the students in our building was one evening to be held at our room.

“Burr,” I said,—grasping his hand as he was leaving the supper-table,—“one moment,” and I arose and walked down the hall with him. We went together to our apartment.

"A little prayer-meeting will be held in our room to-night, if you have no objection."

"Objection! No, not the least."

"Will you not be present, Burr?" I asked tenderly, for I felt deeply for him. Oh, I thought of his mother. "Friends only will be there. Your true friends, Burr; not those who would lead you astray. You will stay, will you not, Burr?"

"I have a previous engagement," was his reply, at the same time making an effort to disengage his arm from mine.

"Of more importance than the interests of your soul?" I asked. "God's Spirit is hovering over the college. His invitations of mercy are sounding in our ears. His people are praying and labouring to bring souls into the kingdom of the Redeemer. Will you not, while every thing conspires to fix the attention upon eternal realities,

think of your soul's true interests?" I said earnestly.

"O Burr, this is no time for dallying or trifling. Call upon God while he is near. Seek him while he may be found. These are divine warnings. Does it not seem, then, as if there were times when he is especially near to us, and others when he holds himself a great way off?"

He stopped a moment, as if listening; at last he said, with his eyes cast upon the floor, "Yes, Fisher, I believe all these things as much as you do. I was brought up in them, but"—he hesitated—"but I have an engagement this evening. Some other time, perhaps—it ought to be attended to some time—but not now. I promised Tom Tracy." And in an instant he slipped from my side, and was gone!

Though he could refuse to join us, he

could not prevent our bearing him on our hearts at the throne of mercy. Every one who knew Burr liked him, and every one who had his interests truly at heart regretted his intimacy with Tom Tracy. Burr was remembered in our little meeting, and his case was the burden of many an earnest petition. The next morning at prayers, Professor L—— made a most solemn and affecting appeal to the young men, beseeching them to give earnest heed to those things which related to their salvation.

“This is the forming period of your character,” said he; “it may be the great crisis in your soul’s history. You are now called upon to repent, to abandon your sins, to begin a life of holy obedience to God and of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.” He then showed how absorbing were the interests of manhood, and

how the cares of life would crowd upon our attention, if our lives were spared, estranging us farther and farther from heaven and holy things, and closed in a most impressive manner with those words of the preacher: "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes; but know thou," he said emphatically, "that for all these things *God will bring thee into judgment.*"

My own heart trembled, and I looked to see how Burr appeared. His eye was intently fixed on the professor; then he covered his eyes with his hand, and leaned his elbow upon the desk. There was deep thoughtfulness in his movements.

"An arrow of conviction has struck his heart,"—I thought to myself, offering up a silent prayer to God in his behalf.

After that, we dispersed to our several duties. My heart was with Burr all that day; and every time we met, I saw that his mind was ill at ease. On returning to my room in the afternoon, it was evident he had just occupied it, and I found Alleine's "Alarm" open upon his desk. He did not appear at supper. "Where is Burr?" I asked myself and others. No one seemed to know. I went on my way to visit a young man who roomed two squares off, and who evidently felt a deep sense of his guilt before God. Burr was constantly in my mind; nor had I gone far, before a quick step approached me from behind, and Burr was at my side.

"Burr,"—I exclaimed cordially, "I am so glad to see you,—you were not at supper?"

"No," he answered, "no; I was not at supper."

"How are you to-day?" I inquired, hardly knowing what to say, and yet wanting to say something.

"I cannot tell," he replied sadly. "There is a strange conflict within. I feel as Paul says, 'The things that I would I do not, and the things that I would not, those I do'—You see I know Scripture."

Ah, how critical was his position! The Spirit of God striving with him, and he, I fear, resisting! I spoke earnestly with him, and we almost stopped in the street as we talked.

"Yes, yes; it is all so," he said; "and I have had many—many minds about accepting the professor's invitation to his room, for all who are inquiring about a better life—but"—

I urged his going with all the eloquence I was master of. Just then a low whistle

was heard on the still night-air. Burr started. I looked around and saw, in the shadow of one of the college-buildings, a figure wrapped in a large cloak ; nor could I fail to discern, by the clear moonlight, that it was Tom Tracy.

“I must go !” said Burr excitedly.

“Yes—with me—to the professor’s !” And taking him by the arm, I would gladly have hurried him away from this dangerous vicinity.

He shook his head, and disengaged himself.

“Do go with me !” I exclaimed.

“No, Fisher,” he replied deliberately, “I must go my way this time ; a more convenient season will soon come, and I will go with you then.”

He joined Tracy, and they went off together.

Ah ! what a fatal decision ! From that

night, he became an opposer of the gospel. He had resisted the gracious pleadings of the Spirit of God, and was left to his own weak, deceitful, sin-defiled heart. He became sour, bitter and angry against every movement or wish to lead him to seek his true interests.

William Burr would not resist the evil influences of wicked companions, and he was left to abide the consequences. The next winter, there were riots and disturbances at college, when he, with Tracy and some others, left, never more to return. It was a great grief and terrible disappointment to his poor mother. After idling at home for some time, he shipped for sea, and was never heard of more.

Many years have passed since then, and I have seen the beginnings and endings of many a young man. I have been

greatly prospered in the world, while many have fallen by my side, and I have never seen the time when I could safely act upon any other principles than those in which my pious mother instructed me. They brought me safely through the temptations of boyhood, the dangers of youth and the corrupting influences that cling around the path of manhood. And what I want to say to everybody is this: when you leave your pious mother and your Christian home, carry away with you the principles and habits that you have been brought up in. Do not leave them behind, on any account. They are your only safety in a corrupt and irreligious world. Act upon them. Do not be ashamed or afraid of them.

Continue the habits of prayer which, as a child, you were taught at your mother's knee. If you need to pray as a child—if

you have sins to be forgiven, mercy to crave and strength to sustain you, while you are at home, much, very much more will you need to pray for them when you are away from home, amid strangers and temptations.

Revere the Sabbath-day at all risks, and keep it holy. God has commanded it, and you should stand steadfastly by God's testimony. You will never be the worse for it, however much temporary inconvenience you may suffer. Do not be ashamed or frightened out of it by any sneering speeches or foolish laughter. God will keep and help those who trust in him : they shall rest securely under the shadow of his wing.

Never fear to speak the truth. Honesty is always the best policy, for God will bring every secret thing to light, whether it be good or whether it be evil.

Be true to a high temperance standard, and do not smother your conscientious scruples to please anybody. You must act for yourself. Nobody can shield you at the bar of conscience or the bar of God. If you sell your conscience to another on earth, and excuse yourself for doing a wrong thing because you are the clerk, or the servant, or the instrument of another, that man cannot save your soul from the consequences of wrong-doing. They will be visited upon yourself, and you alone must bear them.

Above all, keep your heart ever open to the gracious visits of the Holy Spirit.

Do you remember what the Lord Jesus Christ told his disciples, just before he was crucified, about this Spirit? I will tell you. "If ye love me," he said, "keep my commandments, and I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another

Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever: even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you and shall be in you.”—“And the Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.”

You see he is the Spirit of truth—the Comforter. He will teach us our duty; he will bring Christ's words to our mind; he will not let us forget,—for forgetting our duty, forgetting God's requirements, is one of our most easily besetting sins. Oh, what a blessed thing it is, that the Holy Spirit has a part in the great plan of our redemption! Above all, then, let me repeat, keep your hearts open to the

gracious influences of the Holy Spirit. Sometimes, when God revives his work among his people, the Holy Spirit is especially near, solemnizing the hearts of the impenitent and unthinking, and quickening those who love the Lord, to duty. Then, O young man, resist him not! Grieve him not, because he comes to stop you in the way of sin—to open the door of your heart, for your Saviour to enter. Do you know that it is recorded in Holy Scripture, that all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men, but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven him? “Whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.” And why this dreadful sentence? Because, if you

resist the Spirit of grace, and quench his strivings in your heart, you hinder Christ's entrance. There will be no seriousness, no conviction, no penitence, no self-abasement, no desire for pardon, nor prayer for mercy.

Consider what I have told you, and keep a conscience void of offence towards God and towards man.

